

**SURVEY OF SOUTH AFRICAN EXPATRIATE TEACHER
ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PRIVATE
AND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN OMAN**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that the '*Survey of South African expatriate teacher attitudes towards inclusive education in private and international schools in Oman*' is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Date

Student number

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education is an international philosophy that places emphasis on the provision of special education services to students with special learning needs within regular classrooms. Teachers, regardless of where in the world they are, require positive attitudes to engage in discussions, adapt curricula, develop strategies and acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for the implementation of inclusionary practices. The aim and rationale for this study was to explore the attitudes of South Africans as expatriates in a foreign country (Oman) at schools where inclusion was recently implemented but where little research was conducted in the area. In addition, the purpose was also to gain more knowledge about the elements that may influence teacher attitudes towards inclusion.

A quantitative approach was employed and an online questionnaire was used to obtain data. The small sample (N=35) limited findings to descriptive statistics only. The study revealed that most teachers held positive attitudes towards the fundamental principles of inclusive education but teachers held negative attitudes towards the practical implementation of inclusion within classrooms. Teachers who received training were more positive to supporting inclusion. Male teachers expressed greater negativity than female teachers towards inclusionary practices in schools but then male teachers were more supportive and willing to undertake training, engage in teacher support and work collaboratively. Teachers teaching older groups of students appear to be less knowledgeable and less prepared or equipped to deal with inclusion. Teachers with less teaching experience held more positive attitudes towards inclusive education.

Recommendations were made to provide suggestions of ways to eliminate and discourage negative attitudes and research based recommendations for future research were listed.

KEY WORDS

- Inclusive education
- South African expatriate
- Teacher attitudes
- Private and international schools
- Special education needs
- Learning difficulties
- Inclusionary practices
- Quantitative research
- Post-positivism paradigm

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ABBREVIATIONS

DoE	Department of Education
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HSBC	Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation
IASL	International Association School Librarian
IE	Inclusive Education
MDGs	Millennium Developmental Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SAGO	South African Group in Oman
SEN	Special Education Needs
SQU	Sultan Qaboos University
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen)
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISA	University of South Africa

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Children with special educational needs are progressively being educated in mainstream schools throughout the world (National Council for Special Education 2006). The past few decades has seen a shift away from educating children with special learning needs in separate settings towards greater inclusion in regular classrooms, ensuring that all individuals belong to a community. Governments internationally are increasingly in favour of inclusion as the ideal standard for education. Educational authorities are, therefore, adopting a '*philosophy of inclusion to address their social and moral obligation to educate all students*' (Forbes, 2007:66).

Research has shown that the success of inclusive education is dependent upon teachers' attitudes (Gaad, 2011:92). As inclusion becomes more prevalent in classrooms and to ensure proper implementation thereof it becomes imperative to understand baseline attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. Gaad (2011:92) also mentions that appropriate planning is necessary to effect change in attitude. As a result, since teachers are expected to support students with a diverse range of needs, it is crucial that teachers are appropriately prepared to become an inclusive educator and display positive attitudes towards inclusive education. It is important to examine the attitudes of teachers towards the inclusion of students with learning difficulties into regular classrooms as their perceptions may influence how they behave towards and accept these students. "*Negative perceptions of inclusive education may become obstacles, as general education teachers attempt to include students with disabilities*" (Cawley, Hayden, Cade, & BakerKroczyński, 2002 in Newton, Hunter-Johnson Gardiner-Farquharson & Cambridge, 2014:1).

Alqaryouti (2010:216) expands on some of the attitudes. Firstly, all participants in the education sector should accept a more innovative and diverse approach to education. These participants should also believe that students with special needs are able to interact successfully in the learning process. Inclusive education policies should include a large collection of diverse and educational strategies that can respond to the needs of each student in regular education situations. Alqaryouti (2010:217) also explains that the educational staff should be supported and educational practices should be flexible with regard to outcomes, constructive education, assessments and evaluation. In other words, realistic and practical guidelines should support the teaching. Stainback and Stainback (1996:49-50) cite that strong teachers provide support in the classroom, cooperate in developing the

curriculum, adapt their teaching methods to meet the learning style of the students and engage in discussions with families and communities in order to understand their expectations and needs.

In a speech to the 33rd session of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in Paris, France on 4 October 2005, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos (Ministry of education, 2009:3) stated:

“We devote great care and attention to the development and reform of education in Oman. Our aims include the raising of standards and updating the curriculum to make it richer and more relevant to the needs of an ever changing world... and the creation of an educated population who can make a positive contribution to the development process by dealing confidently with change and new development.”

These words, by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos of Oman, resonate well with recent trends in education policies to develop more functional societies. The responsibilities lie with all role-players in education to provide for opportunities which will raise standards, change curricula and implement practices necessary for reform.

This study aims to ascertain the attitudes of South African expatriates teaching in Oman towards these recent reforms in education. The rest of this chapter firstly outlines the background to the study (section 1.2), the problem statement (1.3) and the significance of the study (1.4) together with its aims, objectives and research questions for the study (1.5). Thereafter, certain limitations and delimitations are discussed (1.7), key terms for the study are briefly explained (1.8) and then an outline for the rest of the chapters is provided (1.9).

1.2 BACKGROUND TO STUDY

To get a better understanding of this study, the nature of South African expatriates to Oman (1.2.1) set against the backdrop of recent education developments in Oman (1.2.2), are discussed.

1.2.1 South African expatriates in Oman

As a result of globalisation, many South Africans with specialised training and skills have become part of the labour market abroad. There are many reasons for this trend some of which stem from the prevailing socio-political climate and socio-economic conditions in South Africa. Post-apartheid South Africa has witnessed an influx of nationals being recruited to Middle Eastern countries, such as the United Arab of Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman. According to a report

conducted on expatriates by the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC), the Middle East has come to symbolise a region providing incentives and rewards to expatriates looking for financial gain and a place to live and work (Blackburn, 2012:7). The report further explains that despite the many positives, the region still remains most popular with short term expatriates. Many expatriates that move to the Middle East hold a stronger than usual connection to their home country suggesting that many intended to move to the region for a set period of time, potentially to take advantage of the higher income available to expats in the region, before moving elsewhere or back to their home country (Blackburn, 2012:4). Other factors as cited by Blackburn (2012:4-5) that may ascribe to expats moving back to their home country include family needs, rising living costs, work contracts coming to an end, political instability, etcetera. In another online survey, conducted by e-View in the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (US), Canada and Dubai, revealed that 72% of South Africans indicated their likelihood of returning to South Africa due to changing perceptions despite the negative news about the country (Hartigh, 2009).

The South African expatriate community has for a while also enjoyed the benefits from working in Oman. However, there is another growing concern amongst the expatriates; job opportunities will become fewer and fewer as the country undertakes a policy to reduce the number of expatriates due to a process, called Omanisation. Omanisation is part of the government's intensified nationalisation process to help reduce the number of expatriates in Oman (Al Harthy, 2011:6).

According to Oman's National Centre for Statistics as of March 2014 the population of the country hit 3,987,033, with 2,226,033 Omanis and 1,761,000 expatriates residing in the country. Of the total number of expatriates, 34,500 are in community posts and personal services including expatriates working in the educational sector. Oman, like several Gulf States including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait, has undertaken a common policy to increase the percentage of nationals working in private business sectors. Taking into consideration why expatriate South Africans work in Oman and also why they would leave the country, this research attempts to ascertain the attitudes, as shaped by past and present practices, towards the implementation of inclusion in their current positions. In order to understand and explain attitudes of teachers, a closer look at Oman's inclusive practices need to be undertaken.

1.2.2 The development of inclusive practices in Oman

The history of a modern educational system is recent, since its beginning was only in 1970 under the guidance of H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said (National Report of Oman, 2008:18). In 1978, Oman adopted a policy which provided for the education of learners with certain learning needs and much later a pilot project was started to support students who experience learning difficulties in mainstream schools (National Report of Oman, 2008:53). Ever since, efforts have been made to broaden the

definition of inclusive education; Oman acknowledged that including learners who have been excluded from the mainstream educational systems contributes to the *Millennium Developmental Goals* (MDGs) (UNESCO, 2002). The MDGs plan to offer universal primary education by 2015, of eradicating poverty, marginalisation and achieving universal primary education, thereby helping to promote the broader goals of social justice, social inclusion and collective well-being (National Report of Oman, 2008:52; UNESCO, 2002).

In keeping with the traditional view of inclusive education, Oman initially adopted the remedial approach by establishing special schools (National Report of Oman, 2008: 52). These special schools catered for students with special educational needs, most usually those with physical and/or mental disabilities. A school for students with hearing impairments was established in 1979 and in 1984 a school for students with visual impairment. In 2007/2008 a total of 705 students were receiving education in these schools. The Ministry of Education (MoE) of Oman realised, after conducting further research, that placing children in various forms of special schools away from mainstream had its disadvantages; these schools segregated and isolated individuals. The MoE acknowledged that inclusive settings provided opportunities for students with disabilities to achieve better results, the opportunity to interact, communicate and build social networks with peers. In 2001, in response to these broader inclusivity definitions of social inclusion of addressing diversity through the learning of cultures and communities, Oman started a pilot project to provide support to students with learning disabilities in mainstream schools (National Report of Oman, 2008:52-54). The focus of education implied the need to provide opportunities for all young people to have learning opportunities in mainstream schools regardless of their cultural and social background or differences in abilities and capacities.

An inclusive approach required the recruitment of a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff. Not only did the MoE seek to employ foreign nationals to assist as special education teachers and assistants, but the government at national level stepped in to address other deficiencies too. In 2006 the Sultan Qaboos University of Oman introduced a special education diploma course to address special needs education. The ministry in collaboration with UNICEF, organized workshops to help teachers deal with students with learning disabilities and together with other non-government agencies provided services to students to increase the awareness of the rights of students with disabilities amongst parents and members of the community (National Report of Oman, 2008:52-54).

In 2008, the Royal Decree 63/2008 on the law of the disabled extended the right of free quality education to all students, both boys and girls from all socio-economic levels to individuals with learning difficulties in the country. The mammoth task of restructuring educational policies, upgrading infrastructure, advocacy of policies and creating general public awareness have been some of the

countries challenges for the country. Although some research was conducted regarding problems relating to special needs education, according to Weber (2012:86) it was too early to judge the effectiveness of the introduction of inclusion practices in Middle Eastern countries, such as Oman, because of practices being relatively new. Weber (2012:8) also explains that inclusion is practiced mainly in privately run international schools in the Gulf of Arabia, but states that there is a growing interest to implement inclusive education into all mainstream schools in most Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Privately run international schools were the first to respond and introduce inclusive practices because, firstly, it served a diverse international community which required varied teaching styles and programmes and, secondly, funds were more accessible than in government or local schools (Nadra, 2009:19).

Pawelski (2012), a senior researcher for *O & O Oracle* (online), reported that in 2010 the United Nations (UN) recognized Oman as one of the most improved, stable and developed countries in the Arab world and recognised the significant progress made in extending education to both boys and girls throughout high school and college. International and privately owned schools were among the first to adopt special needs programmes at mainstream schools. Teachers with expertise in the field of special needs have been employed from across the globe to address learning disabilities in education. Many South African teachers who left South Africa before and also during the adoption and implementation of inclusive practices in South Africa are now faced with having to deal with inclusive practices in a foreign country, like Oman. Those teachers who had previously been employed in mainstream schools as regular teachers are now expected to adapt their teaching practices to include learners with special needs.

This is an opportunity for a unique research - to explore the attitudes towards inclusive education held by South Africans as expatriates teaching in Oman.

1.3 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Understanding the nature of in-service teachers' attitudes towards an inclusive education remains a major challenge because of the limited empirical research in this area (Mdikana, Ntshangase & Mayekiso, 2007:127; Weber, 2012:85). The underlying assumption of this understanding is that professional attitudes may well act to facilitate or constrain the implementation of inclusive education. From this perspective, it should be a concern for all role-players in education to get to know and understand the attitudes of teachers towards the implementation of inclusion in schools and vice versa and to find out how the implementation of inclusion has influenced the attitudes of teachers.

Since the inception of the law, Royal Decree 63/2008 to grant the right of free quality education to all students, studies in Oman reflect a dearth of research on how in-service teachers perceive inclusion (National Report of Oman, 2008:52). The MoE in Oman acknowledges that for inclusive education to become a reality, it is essential to create a flexible educational environment encouraging a move away from the traditional teacher-centred approach towards a learner-centred approach which can better respond to the diverse needs of all learners. This type of learning requires a different mind-set to that of the traditional role instructors (National Report of Oman 2008:69). In order to determine and understand how teachers feel, the research for this study will attempt to unravel what the attitudes of educators are towards inclusive education in Oman and also seek to identify certain elements that influence these attitudes. More relevant to this study is to determine the attitudes of South African expatriate teachers towards the implementation and the adoption of policies, decreed by the law of 2008 in Oman, at private and international schools.

1.4 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the attitudes of mainstream teachers towards inclusive education in private and international schools in Oman. Hatchel (2009:5) claims that knowing teacher attitudes and concerns about inclusion will help administrators to develop a strong inclusive setting for all students and staff in their schools. Examining the attitudes of mainstream educators towards the inclusion of students with learning difficulties into regular classrooms will give an understanding of how perceptions may influence their behaviour towards and acceptance of such students. Private and international schools are targeted for this study because as noted by both Weber (2012:86) and Nadra (2009:19) the introduction of inclusion in Middle Eastern countries is still new and practiced mainly in private and international schools. It would make sense to explore what is happening in these schools since they were the first schools to address special needs in education.

This study examines more specifically, the attitudes held by South African expatriate teachers in Oman focusing on their foundations of knowledge, gender, training and experiences that may shape these attitudes. In research conducted in 2009 by de Boer, Pijlb and Minnaerta from the Netherlands, they outline the significance of studying factors based on gender, experiences, training and knowledge and how they influence attitudes towards inclusion in education. Interestingly, results from their study reveal that males are less positive than females; younger experienced teachers are more positive than more experienced teachers and special trained teachers are more positive towards inclusion (De Boer et al, 2011: 346-349). Similarly, the present study also seeks to explore if items such as gender, years of experience, teaching levels and knowledge acquired have any effect on the attitudes of South African teachers in Oman.

Other factors perceived as significant to the implementation of inclusive education and which potentially influence the attitudes of teachers include *policy implementation, resources, support and types of disability* (Loreman, Forlin & Sharma, 2008; Hwang & Evans, 2010; Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer & Skarlind, 2011; de Boer et al, 2011; Rahaman, 2012). For example, in the study conducted by Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011:77) they give a comparative perspective on teacher attitude-constructs that impact on inclusive education in South Africa and Sweden. The outcome by the South African teachers reflected a negative attitude towards *Inclusive Education (IE) Policy Implementation*. However, they held more neutral views towards a *Support Policy* with the need for more specialised and financial support, addressing the feasibility of inclusive education practices. The authors (Nel et al, 2011:86) ascribe these attitudes to the fact that the notion of inclusive classrooms is relatively new to South African teachers. Overall, many teachers in South Africa were ill prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners; hence the development of a negative attitude towards inclusion.

Similarly this study is also aimed at examining attitudes of South Africans currently teaching in mainstream schools and will explore elements related to policy at schools, support, inclusionary practices, etc. The findings from this study may provide an understanding of how elements influencing attitudes of teachers may affect the implementation of inclusion. The study makes recommendations for further research; the study will also hopefully add to the small number of research studies concerning attitudes towards inclusion in education in the Middle East and help to initiate discussions pertaining to this emerging field.

In summary, it is important to discern teachers' attitudes and use the information acquired to view the aspects which make the process of inclusion successful and the aspects which are perceived as barriers to the process. In other words, this study attempts to provide suggestions of ways to eliminate and discourage negative attitudes, while promoting positive approaches. The researcher therefore recognizes the relevance of establishing teacher attitudes of South African expatriates towards inclusion in Oman.

1.5 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

The overall aims of the study are to:

- determine the general attitudes of expatriate South African teachers towards inclusive practices in Oman;
- explore elements that may influence attitudes towards inclusive education;
- make recommendations for more inclusive practices.

More specifically the study aims to:

- determine the attitudes in terms of the positive, neutral and negative responses towards the implementation of inclusive education held by South African expatriates teaching in Oman;
- explore if attitudes of teachers towards inclusion are affected by gender, educational level, years of experience and teaching training;
- identify some elements in the implementation of inclusive practices and examine the influence it may potentially have on teachers' attitudes;
- provide suggestions of ways to eliminate and discourage negative attitudes, while promoting positive approaches.

The following research questions have been formulated to address these aims and objectives:

- What attitudes towards inclusive education are held by South African expatriates teaching in private and international schools in Oman?
- How do teacher characteristics impact the attitudes of South African teachers towards inclusive education?

1.6 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

1.6.1 Limitations

This research limits itself to a certain sector of the community; teachers in private and international schools in Oman were targeted. The research focuses on a small proportion of the South African expatriate community teaching in these schools, while it excludes the Omani population as well as expatriates of other nationalities. This focus limits the number of respondents partaking in the research. This research for a dissertation of limited scope has therefore been restricted to an exploratory design- to gain insight and information on a research problem that has few studies as well as the study having a small sample size (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:28). In other words, the findings in this study cannot be generalised to the entire population.

1.6.2 Delimitations

All respondents in this study were from private and international Omani schools and who were willing and able to participate in the research. Central to the research is to explore the attitudes of expatriate teachers and how their demographics and certain elements influence their attitudes towards inclusive education. South Africans were targeted; firstly, because it was more convenient to obtain their consent and secondly to conduct the study in the English language medium. The medium of instruction in most local Omani schools is largely conducted by Omani teachers in the Arabic language. This study therefore excluded all other nationalities as well as all other expatriates. Another reason why South Africans were specifically targeted is because as expatriates in Oman there is always the possibility of them returning to their home country and stepping into inclusive environments. Lastly, it is in the interest of the researcher to determine attitudes of South African teachers because as a South African the researcher shares a concern on how teachers feel about adopting and implementing inclusion in schools.

1.7 KEY TERMS FOR THE STUDY

The terms below which the researcher deems necessary to define are those that are directly linked to the research question of this study, “*What attitudes towards inclusive education are held by South African expatriates teaching in private and international schools in Oman?*” It is important to have clear definitions of the terms used in order to draw clear understanding thereof as they relate to this research.

1.7.1 Inclusion in education

According to Rafferty, Boettcher, and Griffin (2001:266), inclusion refers to “*the process of educating children with disabilities in the regular education classrooms of their neighbourhood schools*”. These would be the schools they would attend if they did not have a disability – providing them with the necessary services and support. However, in this present study, neighbourhood schools refer to international and private schools in Oman catering for the needs of expatriates and not necessarily the neighbourhood or the area from which the expatriates would hail from.

International schools by nature cater for students of mixed nationalities; social inclusion in these schools is pivotal to the implementation of education to develop culture-sensitivity and mutual understanding of communities (UNESCO, 2002). Arnesen, Allen, and Simonsen, (2009:46) note that inclusion is “*a process of transforming societies, communities and institutions...to become diversity-sensitive*”. Linked to this definition is the concern with issues of social justice. Ballard (2003:59)

clarifies that teachers should address issues of respect, fairness and equity in their classrooms through the understanding of historical, socio-cultural and ideological contexts.

Karagiannis, Stainback and Stainback's (1996:3) definition describes inclusive education as the "*practice of including everyone*" irrespective of talent, disability, socioeconomic background or cultural origin. This definition follows the guidelines of the *Education for All* (UNESCO, 2002).

1.7.2 Attitudes

Defining the term *attitude* can arguably be confusing and ambiguous, but according to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975:1), attempts have been made to integrate the different definitions of the concept attitudes. However, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975:1) note that because of the diversity of the attitude definition and the difficulty of finding consensus and justification for one definition as opposed to others, it has led researchers to intuitively select a particular measurement procedure that seems to fit the purpose of their study. Similarly, this study has undertaken a conceptual theory (expound upon in Chapter Two) which will explain the concept of attitude suited for the current research.

Kerry (2014) from the online webs, *About Education*, defines attitudes as a "*learned tendency to evaluate things in a certain way which can include evaluations of people, issues, objects or events*", which can be observed as either positive or negative, but can also be uncertain at times. In other words it is the way you think and feel about something and may affect a person's behaviour. According to an American psychologist, Allport (1935:789), these attitudes can be formed from a person's past and present; be measurable and changeable; influence the person's emotions and behaviour.

Ajzen (1991:182) categorised the different components that make up attitudes towards a certain *Behaviour* (the act), namely, as the *Attitude* component (how the issue, event, object makes you feel), the *Perceived Behavioural Control* (the individual's beliefs and knowledge) and *Subjective Norms* (how the attitude influences the behaviour or the tendency to act towards something in a particular way). An individual's way of viewing the world and reacting to it are influenced by these factors. These attitude components form the *Intention* to the *Behaviour*. *Intention* is viewed as the precursor, the will to act or implement an action (Ajzen, 1991:182).

In brief, the study of attitudes towards inclusion in this study will be examined (and further explained in Chapter Two) by the following three components (Ajzen, 1991):

- behavioural beliefs based on personal experience - referred to as the *Attitude*;

- the support for desired behaviour; normative expectations of others - referred to as *Subjective Norms*;
- and prevailing knowledge, skills and training in the desired behaviour - referred to as the *Perceived Behavioural Control*.

1.7.3 South African expatriate/expat

An expatriate ('expat') is somebody who resides temporarily in another country and culture, often on expat work projects (International Expatriate Foundation, established in 2008, <http://expatriatefoundation.org/course/modern-expatriates-global-executive-managers/>). Usually they do not plan to live in that country permanently. Presently there are many South African expatriates residing temporarily in Oman.

1.7.4 Mainstream schools

The online website, Dictionary.com, describes a mainstream school as an ordinary or a regular school that mainly caters for the needs of learners who do not require special educational needs (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mainstreaming>). In the context of inclusive education, children in special schools were segregated from the mainstream schools and those children with special needs who were in mainstream schools were integrated (Landbrook, 2009:9). Most local or government schools as well as private and international schools in Oman are considered as mainstream schools.

1.7.5 International and Private schools

In 2009, the International Association School Librarian (IASL) group came together in Italy to brainstorm the definition of international schools. They described it as having a '*moving population*' with a '*multinational and multilingual*' student population offering international curricula for '*international accreditation*' taught by '*transient and multinational*' teachers (Skirrow, 2009). It is not a pre-requisite for students at these schools to learn the national or local language of the country, but usually the language of instruction is English or bilingual. Private schools are considered non-government schools which are usually privately funded mainly from school fees. In Oman, most international schools are privately owned while they still fall under the supervision by the MoE. Hence, these international and private schools in Oman still need to adhere to educational policies as set out by royal decree or by the MoE.

1.8 PLAN OR ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER ONE

This chapter provided a motivation for investigation in this field. It discussed the nature of South African expatriates to Oman set against the backdrop of recent education developments in Oman. The chapter outlined the problem statement and the significance of the study together with its aims, objectives and research questions for the study. Certain limitations and delimitations were discussed; key terms for the study were briefly explained and then an outline for the rest of the chapters was provided.

CHAPTER TWO

This chapter will outline a theoretical framework underpinning the study as well as a literature review of the relevant literature contextualising the study. This is followed by the guiding principles of inclusion as described in the Salamanca Statement (1994) and the movement of inclusive practices in the educational arena, globally, Oman and South Africa. The chapter then provides literature of an analysis of different teacher attitudes towards inclusion and focuses on factors that affect attitudes. Finally, this chapter will conclude with recommendations for future research proposed by the various proponents from studies in the review.

CHAPTER THREE

This chapter outlines the design and methodology of the research and the approach used to capture and analyse data. The information includes the subject selection, instrument used, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures.

CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter four concerns itself with the presentation, the description and analysis of data. Tables and figures are presented together with the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

Chapter five presents discussions on findings, makes recommendations based on findings of the present study as well as present avenues for future researches. Finally limitations of the study are listed.

CHAPTER TWO

A GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING OF INCLUSION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the implementation of inclusive policies as described in the Salamanca Statement (1994) (2.2) and the movement of inclusive practices in the educational arena, globally (2.2.1), in Oman (2.2.2) and in South Africa (2.2.3). This is followed by recommendations (2.4) of various proponents for future research. Finally the chapter concludes with an outline of a conceptual framework (2.5) underpinning this study.

2. 2 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE POLICIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL ARENA

This section provides a literature review and an analysis of studies conducted internationally (2.2.1), in the Gulf region (2.2.2) and in South Africa (2.2.3).

2.2.1 The development of the move towards inclusive education

Mapping and tracking the implementation of inclusive education policies is necessary and justified. At international level the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) called for data collection and monitoring at state level. The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education supports placing pressure on policy makers to demonstrate how policies are leading towards greater educational inclusion which results in the need for the systematic collection of information. According to the European Agency (2011:7) these studies can provide answers to crucial questions and can be used longitudinally within countries to map nation-wide developments, as well as internationally across countries to compare relative developments.

It is now 20 years since the Salamanca Statement from the 1994 World Conference on *Special Needs Education: Access and Quality* was adopted, setting the stage for the universal goal, *Education for All* (EFA). International role-players such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank and others pledged their support by investing into the concept of inclusive education to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels (Better Education for all: Global report, 2009). UNESCO concentrated its efforts on four main issues, namely; policy development; curriculum reform; teacher training; and promoting inclusive practices in communities and society. Promoting inclusion meant stimulating discussion, encouraging positive attitudes and improving educational and social frameworks to cope with new demands in education structures and governance. The successful promotion and implementation of its achievement rested on governments and their willingness and capacities to adopt policies, to address issues of equity in public expenditures on education and approach inclusive education as a constituent element of lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2009).

Policies and the will to implement inclusion alone are not the only factors that guarantee the successful implementation of inclusion. Issues such as poverty, marginalization, traditional and cultural beliefs, discrimination, support structures and resources, etcetera are causes of exclusion in education in many parts of the world, significantly in developing countries (Mitchell, 2010:36-44). Those communities who have less access to education include working children, those belonging to indigenous groups, rural populations, linguistic minorities, nomadic children and those affected by HIV/AIDS are considered the most vulnerable groups. Lack of funding and resourcing also seem to be of the most serious concerns, especially in developing countries (Department of Education, South Africa, 2003). There are studies that indicate the issue of gender based on traditional beliefs play a significant role as education for girls and boys are not equally provided (Mitchell, 2010:46; OECD, 2007; Weber, 2012; Usman, 2011:12).

Monitoring the progress on inclusive education and its implementation globally seems to pose challenges as well. Policy-makers, data collection experts and researchers acknowledge the need for more systematic data collection to provide evidence of country compliance with relevant policies critical for the long-term development of systems of inclusive education (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2011). A sizable amount of researches on the implementation of inclusive practices were conducted in Western countries, such the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK) and many European countries (Weber, 2012; Stubbs, 2002) whereas very little research has been conducted in developing countries in the Middle East, in particular, countries in the Gulf region like Oman, UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Qatar (Weber, 2012; AlZouydi, 2006). Some of the reasons cited for the lack of research are as a result of stereotyped attitudes and practices caused by religion, custom, cultural beliefs and financial status (Weber, 2012:86). *“Historically the people of the Gulf region have not had a very open and accepting attitude towards those with special needs and/or disabilities,”* (Gaad, 2011:91). The implementation of inclusion is further hampered by the reluctance to transform to inclusive environments due to entrenched and well established mind-sets and attitudes created by the past segregationist

education policies and practices with special needs (Usman, 2011:12). There is a dire need for more research to monitor progress in inclusive practices in the Middle Eastern region and especially in Gulf State countries.

Oman for decades has employed many educators from across the globe, including South Africans, for their experience and expertise to teach in general and mainstream schools or where there were shortages of educators (National Report of Oman, 2008). However, very little is known about attitudes towards the implementation of inclusion of expatriates, like South Africans teaching in a foreign country, such as Oman. Some of these South Africans left their home country before the introduction of inclusive education and the implementation of inclusive education policies published in the *Education White Paper 6* by the Department of Education (DoE) in 2001. The Education White Paper 6 outlines the aims to develop an education system that promotes education for all which allows all learners to participate in the education process to achieve their full potential and participate as equal members of society (DoE, 2001). This policy also legally mandates the roles and responsibilities of educators and schools to address barriers to teaching, learning and development. However, like many other countries in the world, South Africa has struggled with bringing policy into practice (Donahue & Bornman, 2014:3). According to Donahue and Bornman (2014:3) to successfully implement inclusion anywhere in the world, educators must have adequate training, sufficient support, positive attitudes and positive caregiver attitudes who are willing to engage and ensure that all children receive the education to which they are entitled.

The current study presents a unique opportunity and a good motivation to understand how expatriate South African teachers feel and respond to their role in the implementation of inclusion in a country like in Oman. The following literature review follows the development of the implementation of inclusive education globally (2.2.2) and then specifically focuses on how inclusion has developed in both Oman (2.2.3) and South Africa (2.2.4). Views held by expatriate South Africans in Oman towards inclusion since the implementation of the Royal Decree 63/2008 on the law of the disabled, which extended the right of free quality education to all students, are viewed significant to the research.

2.2.2 The global movement towards inclusive practices in education

Inclusive education in the context of the goals of EFA is a complex issue, and although there is no coherent approach evident in the literature, there is consensus on the fundamental principles of inclusion first encompassed in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). The UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education (2009) set out the following justifications for working towards inclusive practices and educating all children together:

- *Educational justification.* Inclusive schools have to develop ways of teaching that respond to individual differences and benefit all children.
- *Social justification.* Inclusive schools are able to change attitudes towards diversity and form the basis for a just, non-discriminatory society.
- *Economic justification.* It costs less to establish and maintain schools that educate all children together than to set up a complex system of different schools 'specialising' in different groups of children.

In brief, the philosophy of Inclusive Education (IE) drew attention at a conference held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 and later the Salamanca Declarations in Spain, in 1994. These declarations both advocated for, and imposed legal as well as ethical obligations on nations to include all children with learning difficulties in educational environments. This IE policy challenged all nations to provide quality education for all learners, including those with special needs (Kuyini & Desai, 2007:104). The Salamanca Statement supports this human rights perspective, maintaining that inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity; *"every person with a disability has a right to express their wishes with regard to their education"* (UNESCO, 1994:6). Inclusion is seen as the wider reform of the education system to create a more effective education system and society (UNESCO, 2009). The inclusive education view is to generate an education system that is responsive to learner diversity and to ensure that all learners have the best possible opportunities to learn (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2006:5-8). According to Werthheimer, (1997:7) if inclusion is not seen as a basic human rights issue then situations may be created where *"non-disabled people invite those with disabilities to enter 'their' world, with the notion of it being an 'act of charity or goodwill'"*. This attitude may fail to recognise people's right not to be segregated on the grounds of difference. The Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) provides a clear framework and guidance on developing inclusive education internationally. However, most governments have interpreted and responded to policies on inclusive education in terms of their own history, traditions, values and structures.

2.2.3 The movement towards inclusive practices in Oman

The Sultanate of Oman is the third largest nation on the Arabian Peninsula, bordered by the UAE to the northwest, Saudi Arabia to the west, and Yemen to the southwest. Oman is a large and spread out country occupying two thirds of the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, containing extensive mountainous areas and portions of the desert known as the Empty Quarter. The challenge of implementing programmes and providing services to all learners in an inclusive environment has, in many countries, been an obstacle; Oman is no exception (National Report of the Sultanate of Oman, 2008:13).

The Omani government recognizes the problems of uneven distribution of resources and traditional attitudes to the disabled which are still prevalent (Weber, 2012:93). These cultural and social factors are considered the most important barriers to inclusive education. Since 1995, education in Oman has undergone rapid reform; introducing an ambitious plan to introduce *Free Basic Education* to the Sultanate for all children (including children with learning difficulties) of school age (National Report of Oman, 2008:52-60). This plan was characterized by curriculum renewal and infrastructural growth with the aim to develop life skills through communication and self-learning, the capacity for scientific and critical thinking, the ability to deal rationally with problems and the development of positive values (MoE, 2001). Keeping in line with this vision, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, ruler of Oman, has stressed the Sultanate's commitment to human resources development as a key priority for enhancing the process of education in Oman. The MoE of the Sultanate of Oman has therefore over the years initiated various educational programmes and projects with the aim of providing continuous professional development for its teachers. The Omani government has made a firm commitment that society and teachers need to be convinced that education as well as equal access to educational resources is a moral right (Weber, 2012:93). To this end, the MoE has employed educational institutions, organised workshops and has employed many expatriates (including South Africans) with expertise in the field from countries worldwide to help meet these challenges (National Report of Oman, 2008:52-60).

2.2.4 Inclusive education policies and practices in South Africa

Tyobeka (2006:8) stated at the tenth World Congress of Inclusion, *"The mission of the South African Government is to make inclusive education one of the central elements of our ongoing fight against poverty and neglect of our most marginalized communities and to overcome the gulf between rich and poor."*

Post-apartheid South Africa faced a plethora of challenges in education including the realisation of the constitutional values of equality, freedom from discrimination and the right to a basic education for all learners, including those who experience barriers to learning (Walton, Nel, Hugo & Muller, 2009:105). Inclusive education was initiated as part of the wider transformation process of democracy of South Africa's education. In 2001, the South African DoE released *Building an Inclusive Education IE and Training System - Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education* (DoE, 2001). This White Paper (DoE, 2001) became the official policy for the education department in South Africa. It promotes the establishment of so called full-service (mainstream) schools in which provision is made for all the forms of special education needs that may hinder learners' progress at school. The Paper outlines a national strategy for systematically addressing and removing barriers to learning. Many of these provisions follow the recommendations of the Salamanca Statement of

1994 and assert that inclusive regular schools are a means of combating discrimination and achieving education for all in a cost effective way.

Despite the enabling policy described above, according to Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde, (2012:1) the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa is slow and only partial. Reasons cited as barriers to implementation include the lack of support structures, poor infrastructure as well as the role of special schools. Special schools referred to are the schools which cater for learners with special needs, such as schools for the blind, deaf and handicapped. White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) calls for these special schools to provide support to regular schools and serve as resource centres which according to Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde (2012:3) were evidently lacking. Furthermore, in the study conducted by Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde (2012:4), they report on a workshop for teachers and therapists in South Africa where they introduced a *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)* to provide instruction in a way that reduces barriers and meets the needs of a growing diversity of learners. Their studies indicate that teachers' lack of knowledge and skills and the lack of teacher training programmes result in stress for teachers as well as the lack of progress of learners with learning difficulties. These factors tend to foster the development of negative beliefs towards inclusion practices.

In another recent article by Donahue and Bornman (2014:1) on the *Challenges of realising Inclusive Education in South Africa* they report that up to 70% of children of school-going age with learning barriers are out of school, despite the push for the educational inclusion over twelve years ago by the South African policy document, the *Education White Paper 6*. These authors regard the most significant limitation being the apparent lack of clarity in the policy; it is the ambiguity about the goals for inclusion and also various issues around poor implementation of the policy (Donahue & Bornman, 2014:1). Although teachers often report that they agree with the idea of inclusion in classrooms (Donahue & Bornman, 2014; de Boer, Pijlb & Minnaerta, 2011; Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer & Skarlind, 2011), they actually believe that the needs of learners with barriers are best met in separate classrooms. Donahue and Bornman, (2014:4) expound on the reasons for this belief. Prior to the laws pertaining to inclusion in South Africa, teachers in South Africa were trained to teach either general education or special education, producing many teachers without the necessary skills to teach learners with disabilities. Also a large percentage of the South African teacher workforce is over 50 years of age; hence according to Donahue and Bornman (2014:4) reorienting teachers to new ways of educating learners after many years in the profession remains a significant challenge to inclusive practices. Added to the concerns in schools are the under-supply of teachers who have the capacity and knowledge to instruct a diverse body of learners in a single classroom without considerably increasing their workload, as well as the insufficient and brief training programmes that educate teachers how to accommodate and teach learners with barriers. There is an appeal for more

comprehensive and sustainable training programmes required in schools (Donohue & Bornman, 2014:9).

The advent of inclusive practices implied innovative strategies in teaching and curriculum development. Teachers in previously disadvantaged schools were already stressed and overworked due to overcrowding, understaffing, poor infrastructure, little or no support and the lack of resources at schools (Oswald, 2010:74). Pressure on teachers to deal with students with barriers to learning has increased significantly resulting in the reluctance of teachers to engage with yet another innovation in education (Oswald, 2010:74). Inclusionary practices together with the ever-changing curriculum development characteristic of post-apartheid education system created stress for teachers. Oswald (2010:69) cautions, that the implementation of educational policy in South Africa is doomed to failure without a realistic system-wide strategy for implementation including a major programme of re-skilling, re-empowerment and providing support for teachers.

To conclude, South African teachers primarily agree to the philosophy of inclusion (Donahue & Bornman, 2014; de Boer, Pijlb & Minnaerta, 2011; Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer & Skarlind, 2011) but according to Donohue and Bornman (2014:2), the support of inclusion is not only required; the will to challenge outdated beliefs and practices is also necessary. Otherwise as Bornman and Rose (2010:7) state *“the prevailing negative attitudes towards disability ... (will continue to) ...contribute to the general bewilderment in South African schools towards inclusion”*.

2.3 ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSION

This section aims to look at literature focussing on the attitudes required as precursors for the implementation of inclusive education in schools. The literature explores attitudes (2.3.1) that potentially affect the will to implement inclusive education of teachers internationally (2.3.2) and in particular focuses on studies conducted in South Africa (2.3.3) and in countries in the Middle East (2.3.4), including Oman.

2.3.1 How attitudes impact teaching behaviour

“Teachers form attitudes towards children with disabilities, and ultimately towards inclusion, based on a child's characteristics, the factors in the classroom, and their previous experiences,” (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005:24).

Research has demonstrated that the success of inclusive education is dependent upon teachers' attitudes. As inclusion becomes more prevalent in classrooms and to ensure proper implementation thereof, it becomes imperative to understand baseline attitudes of teachers regarding inclusive

education (Gaad, 2011:92). Classrooms are now becoming more diverse; therefore teachers need to be more aware and sensitive towards students' abilities and their educational needs which are essential to promote successful inclusion. Gaad (2011:92) also mentions that appropriate planning is necessary to effect change in attitude. Since teachers are expected to support students with a diverse range of needs, it is critical that teachers are appropriately prepared to become inclusive educators and display positive attitudes towards inclusive education (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000:369).

2.3.2 International Studies of teacher attitudes to inclusion

In 2009, a significant and comprehensive study focusing on attitudes of regular primary school teachers towards aspects of inclusive education was conducted by de Boer, Pijlb and Minnaerta (2011:331-336), hailing from universities in Norway and the Netherlands. These authors presented an overview of empirical studies, globally, that included- teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, statements relating to their attitude, and the influence of teachers' attitudes on the social participation of pupils with special needs in regular classrooms. A search of relevant studies published over a 10 year period, between 1998 and 2008, was performed using a computer programme, 'EBSCO host Complete' in February 2009. The combination of the term '*teacher attitudes*' with the additional search terms such as '*inclusive education*', '*mainstreaming*', '*inclusion*', '*special needs pupils*', '*special educational needs*', '*impairment*', '*impaired*', '*disorders*', '*handicapped*', '*disabled*' and '*disabilities*' was used. Seven journals in the field- *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *British Journal of Special Education*, *Exceptional Children*, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *International Journal of Disability and Development and Education International* were used, resulting in 396 references. The relevant studies also had to conform to certain criteria - it had to contain empirical data, it had to be published in an international scientific journal, it had to include a standardised measurement of teacher' attitudes and it had to be aimed at the inclusion of children with special educational needs in regular primary education and, more specifically, towards the social participation of those pupils. After careful and criteria based selection, it led to a final database of 26 studies including studies from countries in the United Kingdom, USA, Greece, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Portugal, Israel, New Zealand, Palestine, India, and China.

Components of questions from questionnaires used in the various studies were used and classified to meet the requirements of examining the attitudes of teachers towards IE. Since most studies of de Boer et al (2011:338) reported limited statistical data, it was not possible to calculate common criteria applicable to all studies. Instead, a rule of thumb was developed in order to evaluate the outcomes of the studies. Study outcomes counted as positive when the percentage of positive scores was above 70% or when the mean score was above 3.5, on a five-point Likert scale. The reverse

held for negative scores. Scores were counted as neutral if the percentage was between 30 and 70 or if the mean score was between 2.5 and 3.5.

Firstly, from the studies conducted by de Boer et al (2011:336-340), it becomes evident that several authors in their research regard the *study* of attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education as a significant factor in the implementation of successful inclusive education. Then with regards to *teachers' attitudes* towards inclusive education conducted by de Boer et al (2011:336-345), from the 26 studies their findings were as follows:-

- Authors including Avramidis and Kalyva (2007), Alghazo and Gaad (2004), Bender, Vail, and Scott (1995), de Bettencourt (1999) and Batsiou (2008), report both positive and negative views on *teachers' beliefs*, but by rule of thumb, de Boer et al (2011:337) report these findings to be neutral.
- Clear neutral attitudes results were also evident in the case studies conducted by Everington, Steven, and Winters (1999), Parasuram (2006), Hammond and Lawrence (2003) and by Kim, Park, and Snell (2005).
- Although de Boer et al (2011:337) found some studies indicating more positive results towards inclusive education there were no case studies which reported clear positive results.
- Clear negative attitudes were evident with regards to learners with special or more severe disabilities. Results of Mushoriwa (2001) showed that the majority of teachers were against inclusive education for visually impaired children. In the study teachers' attitude towards the inclusion of blind children in mainstream classes, based on their responses to several statements on inclusive education, was evaluated. In another study by Ghanizadeh, Bahredar and Moeini (2006), they examined teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with AD/HD and also reported hardly any positive attitudes.

De Boer et al (2011:331), in their final conclusion on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, report that globally during the period between 1998 and 2008 teachers held more neutral or negative attitudes towards the inclusion of pupils with special needs in regular primary education. Findings of their study indicated that progress in implementing inclusive education was slow or even lacking. Findings also showed that teachers with fewer years of teaching experience held more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of pupils with special needs than teachers who had many years of experience. However, teachers with experience in inclusive education held more positive attitudes than those teachers without experience in inclusive education. The authors, de Boer et al (2011:34), cite possible explanations for these conflicting findings- it might be that teachers with many years of

teaching experience grow 'stale' in their profession. The more experienced teachers seemingly found it difficult to educate pupils with various types of special needs; hence, these teachers were less supportive towards the implementation of inclusive education. Studies which examined teachers' feelings towards inclusive education showed that teachers did not feel competent and confident in teaching students with various types of special education needs. Studies regarding the behavioural component indicated that teachers held negative or neutral behavioural intentions towards students with special needs. However, these findings did not always concur with similar studies conducted elsewhere.

In other related studies, Ali, Mustapha and Jelas (2006:43) used a self-rated questionnaire with teachers in Malaysia to measure teacher attitude. Overall, findings in their study indicated that teachers had positive attitudes towards inclusive education and agreed that '*inclusive education intensifies social interaction, while it decreases negative stereotypes of special educational needs children*' (Ali, Mustapha & Jelas, 2006:43). However these authors argued for cooperation between mainstream and special education teachers for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Similarly, South African teachers and Swedish teachers, according to the research conducted by Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011:80-85) are in agreement that mainstream schools should provide for learners with learning disabilities. However, they too have somewhat negative perceptions on addressing learners with impairments requiring more specialized support. There is a plea for the necessary financial and technical support, infrastructure and practical guidelines from management and special education teachers.

Rouse (2008:9) conducted a large-scale study on primary and secondary learning support teachers in England for the DoE and Skills on how they perceive their roles, status and identity. This aspect of the research was based on a series of focus group discussions, designed to explore teachers' perceptions of working with children selected as having Special Educational Needs (SEN). Interestingly, the result indicates that primary teachers were more likely to see their identity as a class teacher first, then as a learning support teacher second, whereas secondary learning support teachers probably would have made a specific career choice and were more likely to have undertaken additional professional development leading to qualifications. Thus, secondary teachers more commonly described themselves as '*a learning support teacher*' than do primary teachers. Most believed that they can make a difference to children's lives (Rouse 2008:9). Many teachers were motivated by the desire to help children at risk, but they were frustrated that not all colleagues shared their commitment to this task (Rouse 2008:8-9). In general, both primary and secondary teachers had positive attitudes towards implementation of inclusive education even though they perceived their roles as teachers differently.

Overall, there are many international studies that show both support and opposition to the implementation to the philosophy of inclusion to various degrees. There are studies which indicate more positive than negative attitudes towards the philosophy of inclusion (Hwang and Evans, 2011:1145; Ali, Mustapha & Jelas, 2006; Rouse, 2008) whilst other studies by Mushoriwa (2001), Ghanizadeh, Bahredar and Moeini (2006) in the comprehensive study conducted by de Boer et al, (2011:347) indicate negative to neutral attitudes especially related to the type of disability and other behaviour problems.

2.3.3 Studies on inclusion conducted in countries in the Gulf region

The present study focuses on a research conducted on South African expatriates based in Oman. Research on inclusive education is not as evident in Oman as those in many other countries. However, some research was conducted in other Middle Eastern countries with similar historical socio-political-cultural backgrounds to that of Oman and will be reviewed for the purpose of this study.

A significant report conducted by Weber (2012:85-96) on *Inclusive Education in the Gulf Cooperation Council* (GCC) reports on how inclusive education is viewed in countries in the Middle East. Countries included in the GCC are Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Oman. Weber (2012:85) explains that the introduction of special needs education was only recently introduced in the Gulf region due to the novelty of public education itself as well as prevalent historical cultural beliefs. His article focuses on the programmes, policies, barriers and attitudes related to either segregating or integrating, disabled and handicapped students into mainstream classrooms. Weber (2012:88) consulted published government educational reports and peer-reviewed published literature on inclusive education for both the GCC and the individual member states of the GCC. Regional experts were also consulted as well as international development reports (UN and OECD scholarship) were examined to contextualize inclusive education within the international educational context (Weber, 2012:88).

Weber (2012:86) explains that ‘modern’ special needs education began in the Middle East as segregated institutions but according to reports which he reviewed these countries were transforming their educational practices paralleled to international laws on inclusion to various degrees. As from 2008 many of the GCC countries reportedly responded favourably to the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. For example in Qatar, the government made advanced technology available to specialised schools for the disabled in segregated schooling, however, according to Weber (2012:88) the effective integration of the disabled into mainstream schools is lacking. Qatar, in fact, in 2010 invested in a learning centre, the Awsaj Institute of Education, to accommodate Kindergarten to Grade 8 students with learning difficulties using an evidenced-based approach and on-site school psychologist.

Similarly, policy makers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait followed a strategy of establishing both private and public separate schools but educational systems were often gender segregated (following the typical Gulf paradigm) for impaired children, while inclusive education was implemented in some schools (Weber 2012:89). Both these governments endorsed the needs to address learning difficulties but hold strong cultural views of segregation along tribal, gender, and socio-economic lines (Weber 2012:89). Gender differentiation of teaching staff is used in which male teachers teach boys and female teachers work with girls. This poses another concern for social inclusion at schools.

Other GCC countries, such as the UAE and Bahrain report to have more promising integrating policies. Weber (2012:92) expands on these policies. In 2006, the UAE federal law (The Disability Act) stated that “*the country assures equivalent education chances for the Person with Special Needs in all educational establishments...it shall be in the regular classes or in special classes*” and which provides the option of inclusive education (Weber, 2012:92). The National Report of Bahrain (2008) proclaims that education opportunities should be provided for all even for those with special needs should be integrated with the “*normal students*” (Kingdom of Bahrain, 2008:49). According to Weber (2012:92) despite these promising laws major challenges do exist- majority of teachers especially in the UAE still prefer the traditional method of delivery of special needs education (segregation) over the model of inclusion.

Prior to the UAE federal law in 2006, Alghazo and Gaad (2004:97) conducted a survey that took place in the Emirate of Abu-Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, set out to explore the extent to which general education teachers there accept the inclusion of students with barriers to learning in mainstream classrooms. The research method entailed a questionnaire survey, analysed quantitatively, together with a series of interviews to follow up on a range of issues. Alghazo and Gaad (2004:97) reported that teachers held negative attitudes towards inclusion for students with learning barriers in the general classroom. However, in a later survey conducted by Alahbabi (2009:51) in the UAE, the attitudes of nine hundred teachers were compared based on two criteria: teacher type (special or general education teacher) and grade level (kindergarten, elementary, middle, and high school). Alahbabi's (2009:51) results indicated more positive attitudes generally but reported that special education teachers held significantly greater positive attitudes towards inclusion than general education teachers. Elementary teachers were the most agreeable to accommodate students with special needs in the general educational setting. According to Weber (2012:92) these results corroborate with many other surveys conducted worldwide. Weber (2012:93) ascribes some of these attitudes due to challenges in mainstream schools, with ‘*low functioning children*’ and the shortage of both general education male teachers in addition to special needs teachers in gender-segregated societies, especially since many males consider teaching to be a feminine profession.

Finally Weber (2012:93) makes reference to Oman as following similar policies as with Qatar, providing special services to special needs students through both traditional mainstream schools and specialized institutes. Weber (2012:93) in his conclusion highlights factors which potentially create barriers in these Arab nations; he considers traditional attitudes, cultural and social factors the main barriers of convincing teachers and society that education as well as equal access to educational resources is a moral right. However, Weber (2012:93) gives recognition to all GCC countries for their shift in attitudes towards adopting and implementing educational policies of inclusive education within their countries.

A study conducted more recently by Dukmak (2013:26-38) in the UAE investigated the attitudes of regular classroom teachers towards including students with disabilities in the regular classroom. It is interesting to observe the shift in teacher attitudes in the UAE from studies conducted by Alghazo and Gaad (2004), Alahbabi (2009) and Weber (2012) to the study conducted by Dukmak (2013).

Dukmak's (2013:35) sample of UAE teachers represents a significant number of 455 primary school teachers nationally. According to Dukmak (2013:35) this large sample represents the UAE population very well and the results from the study can serve a much needed purpose for preparing regular classroom teachers to have supportive attitudes towards including and teaching students with disabilities in regular classrooms. The research sought to answer three main questions. The first question dealt with the attitudes of regular classroom teachers towards inclusion. Descriptive statistics used to calculate means and standard deviations revealed that in general, teachers showed positive attitudes towards inclusion in education. This result seems to concur with the overall results of surveys conducted internationally (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000; Ali, Mustapha & Jelas, 2006; & Rouse, 2008) but contradicts those of Alghazo and Gaad (2004:97) who found that most general education UAE teachers had negative attitudes towards inclusion for students with disabilities in the general classroom. Alahbabi's (2009:42) study examined the attitudes of teachers in kindergarten, elementary, high school as well as special education teachers. His findings confer with those of Dukmak's (2013:30) that primary teachers held more positive attitudes. However, comparatively, special education teachers have significantly greater positive attitudes towards the overall concept of inclusion than general education teachers in the UAE (Alahbabi, 2009:52). Special education teachers exhibited significantly greater confidence in their ability to teach students with special needs than general education teachers; they also revealed significantly greater willingness to accommodate students with special needs. It seems reasonable and logical for the special education teachers to hold more positive attitudes towards inclusion given the fact that they received the proper training and obtained the necessary preparation to deal with student with special needs (Alahbabi, 2009:50).

The second question for the study conducted by Dukmak (2013:31) investigated if gender, age, and years of experience affect their attitudes towards inclusion of regular classroom teachers. The relationship between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and their age and years of teaching experience were investigated using Pearson Correlation coefficients. Interestingly, the results revealed that male teachers showed more supportive attitudes than females did and these results were confirmed by one way ANOVA; the results showed statistically, a significant effect of teachers' gender on attitude towards inclusion. No reasons were cited for the possible cause of this effect. With regards to the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and their age, no correlation was found but there was a strong correlation found between teachers' attitudes and their years of teaching experience. This means when teachers' years of experience increase, their attitudes towards inclusion becomes less positive (Alghazo & Gaad, 2004). Donahue and Bornman (2014:4) explain the reasons for this belief when they examined the reasons why South African teachers with more years of experience held more negative attitudes than their counterparts with fewer years of teaching. These authors cite that teachers were trained to teach either general education or special education, producing many teachers without the necessary skills to teach learners with learning difficulties. Also a large percentage of the teacher workforce was over 50 years of age and according to Donahue and Bornman, (2014:4) reorienting teachers to new ways of educating learners after many years in the profession remains a major challenge to inclusive practices.

The third question conducted by Dukmak (2013:31) examined teachers' views about educational placements for students with various barriers to learning and how it influences their attitudes towards inclusion in the regular classroom. Descriptive statistics using frequencies were calculated to see the best educational placement for various types of barriers. These barriers included intellectual, behavioural and emotional disorders, hearing impairment, health impairment, specific learning difficulty, visual impairment, speech and language disorders, and physical. Interestingly, findings revealed that teacher attitudes towards inclusion became most positive when teachers viewed educational placement for students with intellectual disability and emotional and behavioural disability to be in the regular classroom. The most positive response observed was for students with visual impairment to be placed in regular classrooms. The results of Dukmak (2013:32) proved to be inconsistent when compared with the results of Mushoriwa (2001:142) which showed that the majority of teachers were against inclusive education for visually impaired children. The results of Dukmak (2013:32) did not also corroborate with previous studies conducted by Alahbabi (2009:52) in GCC countries where less positive to negative attitudes were recorded by general education teachers towards inclusion for students with more severe disabilities in the general classroom.

In conclusion, the results of Dukmak (2013:34) give hope for the successful implementation of inclusive practices in Middle Eastern countries. The shift in attitudes of primary school teachers is evident in the studies conducted by Dukmak (2013:34); the development of more positive attitudes embracing educational placement for students with intellectual, emotional, behavioural and physical disability to be in the classroom, is encouraging.

2.3.4 Studies of South African teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education

In the very early days of South Africa's democratic transformation process, there were a few studies conducted throughout the country, examples are those by Davies and Green (1998:97102); Daane, Beime-Smith and Dianne (2000:1-9); Bothma, Gravett and Swart (2001:200-204) and Mashiya (2003:59-70) which indicated more negative attitudes of general educators' attitudes towards inclusive education. Many of the subjects involved in these studies lacked special education training and experience. These negative attitudes were not surprising; the country itself was undergoing major challenges faced with many changes; there were many concerns as the process itself was still in its infancy stage and educators were grappling with the implementation of inclusion policies set out in the DoE's White Paper 6 in 2001, (Mashiya, 2003:1-2).

In 2007, Machi explored attitudes amongst a selected group of 185 teachers in South Africa. His selection was based on teacher groups at schools historically labelled in the apartheid years as '*Black*', '*Coloured*' and '*White*'. Machi (2007:1) justified the purpose of his study as a means to investigate the nature of attitudes that teachers with different backgrounds held towards inclusive education and how teachers as a group perceived different barriers to learning. Results from Machi's (2007:56) study reveal more positive attitudes towards inclusion than those indicated in previous studies especially of schools from historical *Black* and *Coloured* primary schools than from teachers from historical *White* primary schools and special schools. Machi (2007:50) gives an understanding of these results. Due to the historical inequality, some teachers in *Black* and *Coloured* schools found themselves "*accustomed to involuntary mainstreaming or inclusion by default*", while *White* teachers in the same type of schools, had little confidence and experience in their ability to cope with special needs and they had many fears and prejudice to overcome (Machi, 2007:50). In other words, those teachers who had more experience with disabilities as well as the more experienced teachers were more favourable attitudes towards integration of students with learning disabilities into regular classrooms. Furthermore, the study revealed positive perceptions towards most disabilities (Machi, 2007:51). Findings of data made it possible to detect that teachers from different backgrounds did not have the same understanding of all these disabilities. The study indicated that teachers from the *Black*, *Coloured* and *White* schools were not in favour of inclusion of learners with more severe disabilities: blind; deaf; wheelchair confined and cerebral palsy (Machi, 2007:52). Machi (2007:52)

explains these differences in perceptions due to conceptual understanding of barriers to learning and teachers who are not well informed and knowledgeable about dealing with a specific learning difficulty.

Later, in 2009, a more detailed study between academics from South Africa and Sweden was conducted by Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011:77). They compared the influence of South African and Swedish teachers' attitudes towards the practical application of inclusive education in the classroom. They give a comparative perspective on teacher attitude-constructs that impact on inclusive education in South Africa and Sweden. Their research is based on a social model of disability which explains how barriers arise because of the interaction between people and their environments. Their problem statement inferred that teachers developed negative attitudes when they encounter obstacles in inclusive education implementation, especially those linked to policy, economics, population composition and cultural issues. According to Nel et al (2011:78) if problem areas could be identified, understood and addressed against this background, teacher attitudes towards inclusive education could be improved. Nel et al (2011:77) based their research problem on the identification of six attitude constructs in Inclusive Education (IE): *support policy issues in IE, implementation of an IE policy, IE receptiveness, feasibility of IE practices, mainstreamed IE and the role of special schools* and simultaneously identifying problem areas in IE as they present themselves through negative attitudes towards areas of IE. Nel et al (2011:77) were convinced that highlighting problem areas reflected by the negative attitudes, could help address concerns and inclusion could be promoted.

South African teachers attending a national conference on inclusive education in mainstream schools in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal in 2008, were sampled (N=500). In 2008, in Sweden questionnaires were distributed to 200 teachers in mainstream schools in three educational regions. A total of 503 questionnaires were analysed representing 375 South African and 128 Swedish teachers. Although the research was conducted in South Africa and compared to that in Sweden, the results that follow focus mainly on the teacher attitudes of the South Africans only. The reason for focussing on South Africans mainly is because the author of the present study aims to specifically highlight the South African context.

The six constructs are described by subsets of questionnaire items that address different aspects of IE which influenced teacher attitude. Nel et al (2011:86-87) report their findings related to the six constructs as follows:

- Construct one, *Support Policy Issues* – this attitude-construct described respondent' perceptions of the implications of policy issues on specialised support in IE. Findings related to this construct showed that South African teachers' overall mean perception indicated neutral views; that they perceived the inclusive education policy on specialised support to

be restrictive or ineffective. The authors ascribe these perceptions to the fact that the notion of inclusive classrooms was relatively new to them.

- Construct two, *Implementation of an IE Policy* - probed respondents' perceptions of the implications of IE implementation. Mainstream educators indicated a negative attitude towards *Inclusive Education Policy Implementation*. The researchers cite that as South Africa was still a new role player in inclusive education, teachers were unsure about future implications of inclusive education policy implementation.
- Construct three, *Teacher Support*, - dealt with teachers' perceptions of IE support structures. The positive attitudes expressed towards specialised and professional support and services and training and organisational support, emphasised teachers' dependency on specialised services for effective IE implementation.
- Construct four, *IE Receptiveness* - evaluated respondents' receptiveness towards the system of IE in schools. South Africa was still seen as being in the IE implementation phase and therefore teachers were more aware of policy and knowledge base issues which were reflected in the positive responses.
- Construct five, *Feasibility of IE practices* - evaluated the perception of the feasibility of IE implementation. South African teachers felt strongly and disagreed significantly with the statement that IE practices demanded little financial support. This could have serious implications to the success of IE in South Africa when addressing extrinsic barriers to learning such as poor socio-economic living conditions and inadequate school facilities which required financial support from the central and provincial governments.
- Construct six, *Special Schools* - evaluated teachers' perception on the role of special schools in IE. The study reports that teachers strongly agreed on the heavy reliance on the support of special schools. Even though the South African education policy, White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001), makes provision for providing support by specialised schools, teachers believed that in future, these special schools should serve more effectively as training and resources centres for mainstream teachers (Nel et al, 2011: 86-87).

In summary, initially many teachers in South Africa held negative attitudes and felt ill-prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners (Davies & Green, 1998; Daane, Beime-Smith & Dianne, 2000; Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2001; Mashiya, 2003), but there is indication of growing support for the philosophy of inclusion (Machi, 2007; Nel et al, 2011; De Boer et al, 2011; Dukmak, 2013

Donnahue & Bornman, 2014). Nel et al (2011:85) suggest remedial action within the country's socio-economic setting and in this way affect change in teacher attitudes. Nel et al (2011) assert in their argument that teachers' attitudes can be changed if they are provided with well-planned information, the necessary support structures and proper training. In their final conclusions, Nel et al (2011:89) quote a statement by Foulger's (2010) on how experiences of teachers could help develop the understanding of attitudes towards inclusive education: *"If attitude[s] do reflect our [teachers'] experience of the world, it is reasonable to expect that it is from that experience, from the information we [they] have concerning an attitude object [IE], that we [they] construct attitudes"*.

2.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The discussion that follows considers some of the factors raised in previous research, which may have influenced teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with barriers to learning into mainstream classes. However, it must be noted that these are not the only factors affecting teacher attitudes but the ones that the author considers most related to the present study.

2.4.1 Gender

Some studies reported by Boer et al (2011:331) support the view that there is no correlation between a teacher's gender and his or her attitude towards inclusive education. On the other hand, the researcher Gaad (2004:3-6) found a significant difference between male and female teachers in the UAE, indicating males held less positive attitudes towards inclusive education and female teachers were more supportive towards inclusion. However, the study conducted by Dukmak (2013:31) also in the UAE contradicts the statement that females were more positive than males. The UAE study indicates males held more positive attitudes than females. Neither of these results were replicated and researchers are cautioned when attempting to link gender as an item to investigate reactions to inclusive education. Often gender is linked to cultural factors, with some cultures ascribing the care of students with learning difficulties to female teachers (Subban & Sharma, 2005:53).

2.4.2 Years of teaching experience

The study of Alghazo and Gaad (2004:98) showed that teachers with one to five years of teaching experience held significantly more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of students with special education needs compared with teachers with six to 11 years of experience and those with 12 or more years of experience. Similar studies were conducted in the UAE and found teachers with less teaching experience had more accepting attitudes of inclusive trends than their experienced counterparts (Alahbabi, 2009:51; Dukmak, 2013:28). Donahue and Bornman (2014:4) confirm this finding and expound on why older teachers in South Africa experience reluctance in dealing with learners with barriers. These authors (Donahue & Bornman, 2014:4) contribute this to a large

percentage of the South African teacher work-force who are over 50 years of age with many years in the teaching profession and who are finding it significantly challenging to re-orientate new ways of educating learners to inclusive practices.

2.4.3 Experience with inclusive education

Experience with inclusive education is described by several authors as a factor which influences teachers' attitudes. In a study conducted by Loreman, Forlin and Sharma (2008:773-785) they compared teacher attitudes' of four countries, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Using a questionnaire, Loreman et al (2008:776) found that teachers were more positive towards inclusive education especially when more exposure or making close contact with special needs children was experienced. According to Alahbabi, (2009:51) and Landbrook (2009:67) teachers with experience generally held significantly more positive attitudes towards inclusive education than teachers with little or no experience. Furthermore teachers who chose special needs education as their field of interest were more willing to teach children with special needs. Special education teachers, for example, tend to display greater feelings of confidence due to the fact working with students with special needs were their passion and personal choice (Alahbabi, 2009:51).

2.4.4 Training

In an article by Rouse (2008:1) it is suggested that the greatest barriers to the development of inclusion are because most teachers do not have the necessary knowledge, skills and training required for successful implementation. Many authors confirm this viewpoint and stress the importance of specialised training. In the study conducted by Rahaman (2012:89) and the comprehensive study by conducted by de Boer et al (2011:345), as well as studies by Avramidis and Kalyva (2007:23), Landbrook, (2009:33); Hwang and Evans, (2011:142) it was found that teachers with long-term training were significantly more positive towards the general philosophy of inclusion, compared to those who had no training at all. It is reasonable and logical to assume that those teachers with special needs training hold more positive attitudes towards inclusion given the fact that they received the proper training and obtained the essential preparation to deal with student with special needs (Alahbabi, 2009:51). Similarly, studies conducted on South African teachers indicated their lack of skills and competency to accommodate diversity in their classrooms as a result of their little or no training (Machi, 2007:30; Oswald, 2010:5; Dalton, Mckenzie & Kahonde, 2012:5). Loreman, Foreman and Sharma (2008:780) recommend that teacher training institutions should consider- for inclusion in their programmes practical experiences with inclusive education in positive and supportive environments; opportunities for students to experience success and reflection; academic content regarding knowledge of policy and law relating to inclusive education. Rahaman (2012:92-94) cite that systematic training and intensive preparation would improve teachers'

attitudes to inclusion, ensuring successful implementation and sustainability of inclusive education in any school situation.

2.4.5 Support

Nel et al (2011:77) found that South African teachers often felt threatened and unsure about inclusive practices in their classroom because of their lack of knowledge and support. These authors deemed it necessary to have support provided at management level and to provide specialised professional support and services to in-service teachers for effective implementation of inclusive education (Nel et al, 2011:88). Eloff (2007:354) elaborates on some of the support structures in her study conducted with South African teachers. South African teachers found it necessary to have adequate resources, collaborative support from skilled-personnel, proper mentoring activities, on-going workshops, reduced class-sizes and a reduced workload (Eloff, 2007:354).

2.4.6 Level of teaching experience

Studies conducted by Alahbabi, 2009 in the UAE indicate the relationship of attitudes towards inclusion and the level of teaching experience in schools. Alahbabi (2009:51) reports that special education teachers had significantly greater positive attitudes towards the overall model of inclusion than general education teachers but amongst the general education teachers the results also showed differences. Elementary teachers appeared to be more willing to include and accommodate students with special needs than kindergarten and high school teachers. Alahbabi (2009:51) explains that high school teachers were possibly less willing to accommodate special needs learners due to the learning content which is focused on more complex concepts and might be difficult for a student with special needs to understand. This together with implications of making accommodations for older students with special needs is possibly the reasons for less positive attitudes. Alahbabi (2009:52) also reports that kindergarten teachers may be less willing to accommodate children with special needs because of the higher degree of training that elementary school teachers received compared to the training of kindergarten teachers.

2.5 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE TEACHER ATTITUDES

There are many researchers that make certain recommendations for future research. De Boer et al (2011:349), found it difficult in their research to conclude if attitudes are a significant factor in implementing inclusive education. Instead they recommend that research should emphasize the importance of focusing on the influence of attitudes on the social outcomes of students with special education needs. These authors (Boer et al, 2011:349), consider the central belief for inclusion is to increase the opportunities for social contacts and relationships between students with special education needs and their peers in regular education. They recommend further research focusing on the social impacts of inclusive education.

Walton, Nel, Hugo and Muller (2009:105-107) did a study on the extent and practice of inclusion in independent schools in South Africa and found these schools to be implementing sound and effective practices. Walton et al (2009:123) recommend that other schools and researchers pursuing to explore studies and wanting to implement inclusion successfully should look at these schools for guidance. The study by Walton et al (2009:120) did not focus on attitudes of teacher; it examined the successful implementation and adaptations of inclusive practices at independent (private) schools in South Africa. This study can provide valuable contributions to the development of positive attitudes, relevant to the present studies.

The GCC states have embraced the theoretical framework of inclusion and have extended its definition to accept all students and to embrace the changes in education needed for inclusive environments. The main challenge in these countries is to overcome historical and cultural beliefs hampering the process of inclusion. Advocacy of policies are strongly recommended for all role players in education to change and shift mind sets (Anati, 2012:63; Alahbabi, 2009:52).

In general, researchers who conducted studies in GCC countries (Alahbabi, 2009; Weber, 2012; Dukmak 2013) collectively recommend the following:

- Long term in-service programmes that focus on changing teachers attitudes towards including students with special needs in general classrooms be developed through;
- In-service activities which are merged into the general education teachers' daily routine to encourage positive attitudes;
- That teacher education programmes for the more experienced teachers focus on the essential principles of inclusion.
- Teacher training programmes in universities educating prospective teachers (special and general), administrators, and paraprofessionals with regards to students with special needs and provide opportunities to evaluate and investigate their attitudes towards inclusion.
- Strong recommendations to study the attitudes towards inclusion of administrators, parents, teachers and stakeholder to further determine if difference in attitudes is based on type and level of education.
- It is recommended that a longitudinal study be used to investigate the effect of training on teachers attitudes towards inclusion.

2.6 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK GUIDING THIS STUDY

This study is guided by Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), initially developed by Ajzen and Fishbein in 1975, but then expanded upon by Icek Ajzen in 1988. The theory proposes a model which can measure how human actions are guided and helps to understand and explain the behaviour of people (Ajzen, 1991:181). According to a study conducted by Subban and Sharma (2005:42) it is a widely used model to determine a *Behaviour* arising from attitudes and has been used in research involving attitudes towards individuals with barriers to learning. In this study the *Behaviour* can be explained as the act or the implementation of inclusive education.

Ajzen and Fishbein, (1975:11-12) describe three constructs which attribute to the *Behaviour*. Three constructs, *Attitude*, *Subjective Norms*, and *Perceived Behavioural Control*, together shape an individual's *Intentions* towards the *Behaviour* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975:12). The *Intention* is an indication of how these constructs motivate the *Behaviour*. *Intention* is also the precursor of *Behaviour* and it is a representation of a person's readiness to perform a given *Behaviour*. A general rule is that the more favourable the *Attitude*, the *Subjective Norm*, and the greater the *Perceived Behaviour Control*, the stronger is the person's *Intention* to perform the *Behaviour* in question.

The model is outlined in figure 2.1 below and represents the three constructs which the theory suggests will predict the *Intention* to perform the *Behaviour*. In this study the *Behaviour* is explained as the act or the implementation of inclusive education. The constructs which attribute to the *Behaviour* are *Attitude* (personal experience), *Subjective Norm* (support for desired behaviour), the *Perceived Behavioural Control* (prevailing knowledge, skills and training in the desired behaviour). The *Intention*, how these controls motivate the *Behaviour*, is the precursor of behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975).

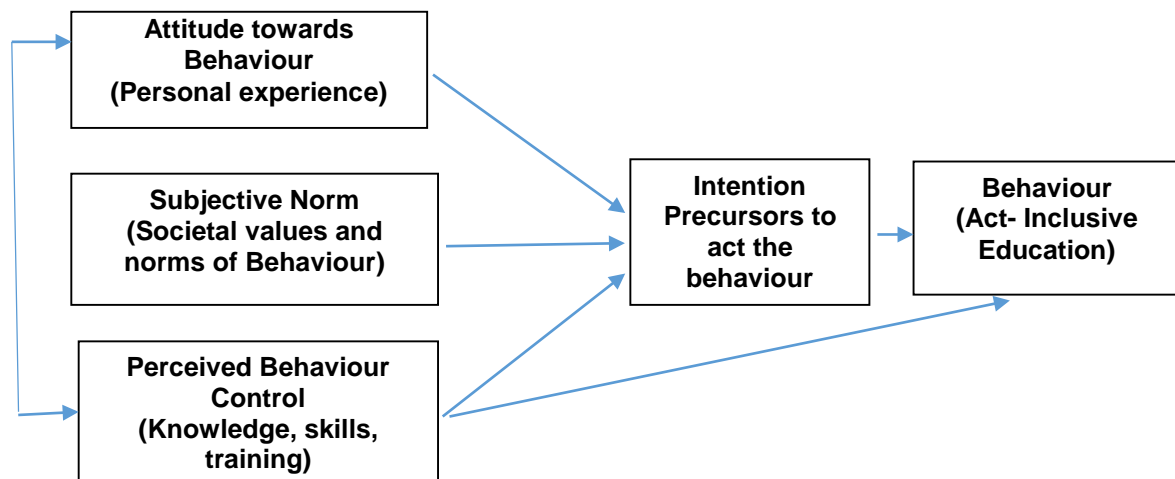


Figure 2.1: Diagram of constructs impacting behaviour (adapted from: Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975)

Ajzen's (1991:182) original theory focused on three attitude constructs aimed at determining the *Intention* to perform the *Behaviour* (act). However, Ajzen (1991:182) realized that the performance of the *Behaviour* are also depended on non-motivational factors, for example, the extent that a person has required opportunities, resources, skills, cooperation of others, etc. which together contribute to the success of the *act*. These non-motivational factors which are also referred to as latent (underlying constructs) are evident when exploring emerging patterns within the three constructs. These underlying constructs are theoretical in nature which cannot be observed directly and therefore cannot be measured directly either (Byrnes, 1998:4). The present study aims to explore emerging patterns across the three constructs to observe some of the latent constructs related to this study.

Ajzen's (1991:206) three attitudinal constructs, the variables which are used to measure the constructs (which will be elaborated on in Chapter 3) and what the variables aim to measure, are summarised in Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1: The constructs of Ajzen's TPB and what it measures (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977)

Ajzen's TPB - CONSTRUCT	Variables which measure the construct	What it measures
Attitude	Personal experience	Measures how the issue, event, object makes you feel
Subjective Norms	Societal values, norms, expectations of the Behaviour	Measures support for desired <i>Behaviour</i> – the willingness of the individual to perform or not perform the target <i>Behaviour</i>
Perceived Behaviour Control	Prevailing knowledge, skills and training	Measures the extent to which a person feels able to enact the <i>Behaviour</i>

To conclude, Ajzen's TPB three measures of control, i.e. *Attitudes*, *Subjective Norms* and *Perceived Behaviour Control*, should come together to motivate the *Intention* of the *Behaviour* (Ajzen, 1991:181). The present study under discussion is based on the premise that the *Intention* to perform the *Behaviour* (inclusive education) is crucial to its implementation and latent constructs are explored to determine the non-motivational elements affecting the *Intention* to perform the *Behaviour*. The following chapter will explain how Ajzen's TPB (1991) will be used as an outline for this study and will attempt to show the links between the strategies employed in the methodology and the attitudes of South African teachers towards inclusive education.

2.7 SUMMARY

Teacher attitudes towards inclusion and breaking down barriers that educators experience are pivotal to this research. Factors that affect attitudes play an important role in making recommendations and possibly changing the opinion of non-supporters. From the literature, it is found that overall, teacher attitudes towards the philosophy of inclusion extend from neutral to positive but they held more negative to neutral views towards the implementation thereof. Teachers do not as such disagree with the principle of inclusion; they are merely more critical of the practicalities. In the literature, factors such as gender, level of teaching, knowledge, teaching experience, training, resources and access to a special educator seem to be a constant challenge for educators. Furthermore, advocacy of policy implementation, the will to implement inclusive practices and the need to address cultural and historical beliefs are paramount to the successful implementation of inclusive education and how teachers perceive and view inclusive education. The literature also indicates that many schools are transforming their systems towards inclusion but strong recommendations towards the accommodation of realistic additional resources, support and training for regular class teachers are necessary. The omission of effective training and additional resources possibly is a much greater threat to successful inclusion than teacher attitudes.

It is evident that teachers are crucial in building more inclusive schools, but how do they feel about this task? Research communicates the view that teachers are the key to the success of inclusionary programmes as they are *'viewed as linchpins in the process of including students with barriers to learning into regular classes'* (Kern 2006:2). Most studies acknowledge that inclusive education can only be successful if teachers are part of the team driving this process. Teachers are perceived to be integral to the implementation of inclusive education; hence, the relevancy of doing a research on teacher attitudes.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter firstly provides the paradigm (3.2) which guides the study. Thereafter the design (3.3) and data analysis procedures (3.4) for the study are considered. Finally, the methodological norms (3.5) important for the research, will be discussed.

3.2 THE RESEARCH PARADIGM AND RESEARCH APPROACH

A *paradigm* is simply a belief system or a theory that guides the way the researcher would carry out the research. A paradigm is essentially a worldview, a system of beliefs, values and methods within which research takes place (Taylor, 2013:1). In other words, paradigms guide how we make decisions and carry out research. A *research approach* or also referred to as methodology, is the *strategy* used to generate knowledge and carry out the research (Wainright, 1997:1263). A research paradigm is viewed as an established model whereas a research approach refers to a way of doing the research; its designs, methods of data collection or analysis and has less evaluative meaning which may or may not be accepted by a significant proportion of a research community. In this subsection the paradigmatic outlook that guided the research (3.2.1) and its relation to the research approach (3.2.2) are considered.

3.2.1 Post-positivist philosophical foundations for the research

This research follows an approach based on the ideology of post-positivism. Post-positivism is an extension which critiques or amends the view of positivists. Positivists describe research as being '*realist*'- the world view being that research uncovers an existing reality, using objective research methods to '*uncover the truth*' (Muijs 2004:4). These methods suggest methodical and scientific procedures with logical conclusions. In contrast to positivism, post-positivists do not see themselves as inevitably solving the problems they set out to investigate. Empirical observations are used to test and develop theories but there are no universal solutions to problems; therefore conclusions may change over time (Robson, 2002:624). While positivists believe that the researcher and the researched person are independent of each other, post-positivists accept that theories, background, knowledge and values of the researcher can influence what is observed

(Robson, 2002:624). Although investigations do not necessarily lend themselves to ready answers, they are more appropriately addressed by the research outcomes that offer thoughtful guidelines, principles and acknowledgements. Like positivists, post-positivists pursue objectivity by ensuring the scientific objectives are clearly defined, general statements in a theory are logical and organised with clear established links to the observable world (Robson, 2002:624). As part of this investigation, the researcher can come to some understanding of how people construct and maintain perceptions of the world. Educational research is essentially concerned with exploring and understanding social phenomena. The mind-set needed to explore this social reality should be non-judgemental and free from biased conclusions. However, from a post-positivist perspective the research makes allowance for the researcher to see the “*whole picture, to take a distanced view or an overview of the research problem*” (Taylor, 2013:2).

3.2.2 Quantitative research approach

Post-positivism allows for a quantitative approach which arises from the belief that human phenomena and variables in human behaviour can be studied objectively. Quantification is noted to be useful by post-positivists because it can provide a broad familiarity with cases; examine patterns across many cases; show that a problem is numerically significant; often be used as the starting point for a qualitative study; and can provide readily available and unambiguous information (Ryan, 2006:21). In this study the researcher shares similar experiences and concerns held by the respondents in the study (post-positivists acknowledge this as being a reality), but to maximise objectivity and to accurately describe the findings of the research, the researcher is detached from the research through the use of quantitative study methods.

Essentially quantitative research seeks to answer questions which are either descriptive in nature, comparative or relationship-based research questions. This study employed a study descriptive in nature embracing a scientific method of enquiry which dealt with data that is principally numerical (Grinnel, 1993:130). The research questions asked to describe the attitudes held by teachers and the statements or items which were set to explore these attitudes were quantified and measured for statistical purposes.

3.3 THE RESEARCH DESIGN FOR THE STUDY

The following sub-sections describe how this quantitative research study was conducted. A brief overview of the research questions (3.3.1) is discussed, followed by a research design (3.3.2) feasible for this type of study and then continues to discuss data collection procedures (3.3.4) for conducting the study which includes from whom and under what conditions the data was collected.

3.3.1 Recap of research questions and how are they addressed

To recap briefly from Chapter One, this study investigates a social phenomenon that describes the attitudes of South African teachers teaching in Oman towards inclusion practices. The first research question for the study has guided the development of the research design and data collection procedures linked to this for gathering information about attitudes and perceptions among regular teachers towards inclusion in education in mainstream schools. The focus of this study is to examine and to describe the following first research question: *what are the attitudes towards inclusive education held by South African expatriates teaching in private and international schools in Oman?*

The second question this study intends to explore is: *how do teacher characteristics impact the attitudes of South African teachers towards inclusive education?* The aim of this question is to explore whether teacher characteristics such as gender, years of experience, level of teaching, and training in special needs have any impact on teacher attitudes towards inclusion. Both of these research questions are based on the premise that attitudes of teachers are essential to the effective implementation of inclusive education (Gaad, 2011; Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer & Skarlind, 2011; Loreman, Forlin & Sharma, 2008; Rahaman, 2012). As argued throughout, inclusion becomes more prevalent in classrooms and to ensure proper implementation thereof it becomes imperative to understand baseline attitudes of teachers regarding inclusive education (Gaad, 2011:92).

To explore the sampled teachers' attitudes, as discussed in Chapter Two, the constructs of Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (1991) are used as the framework to the research design. The three constructs include *Attitudes* (how the event or act makes one feel based on personal experiences), the *Subjective Norms* (measures the individual's beliefs and knowledge about the act) and the *Perceived Behavioural Control* (prevailing knowledge, skills and training in the desired behaviour) (Ajzen, 1991). The *act* or *Behaviour* in this research problem refers to the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom. These constructs and their relevance to the design of the study will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

3.3.2 Exploratory research design

An exploratory research design, non-experimental and descriptive in nature was used to examine the attitudes of teachers given the boundaries of the expectations for a Master's degree mini-dissertation and the sample available at the time of data collection. Exploratory research can be employed when samples are small and when little is known about the area of interest; these findings are typically not generalizable to the population at large (Brown, 2006:43). Typical of this design,

from a post-positivist perspective, is that it affords the researcher flexibility in its data gathering, testing and analysis. There can be limitations in terms of application of the results to broader contexts, however, findings of this study may provide useful insights and provide information to shed light on the research problem and used as a preliminary stage for future research (Babbie, 2007:88).

3.3.2.1 Why a survey design was used for this study

The present study employed a survey which according to the author Wyse (2012) of Snapshot Survey, an online website, who states that surveys are used as an effective tool to evoke responses from participants. A survey is described by Macmillan and Schumacher (2006:25), as being used frequently in educational research to describe views, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and other types of information. Wyse (2012) supports the view of Macmillan and Schumacher (2006:25) claiming that survey results also provide a snapshot of the attitudes and behaviours, including thoughts and opinions, about the target population. In other words, surveys are designed so that information about a selection of people (the population) can be inferred from the responses obtained from a smaller group of subjects (the sample). A survey is considered to be a non-intimidating means of uncovering answers and an unbiased approach can lead to more objective information being obtained. Sue and Ritter (2012:2) also explain that surveys are used in exploratory research designs to formulate problems and explore concepts rather than to test hypotheses. The results from this survey will hopefully provide information to describe the attitudes of teachers towards inclusion in education, which will evoke discussion and possibly serve as a stepping stone for further research.

3.3.2.2 The questionnaire as a research instrument

Many researchers who had studied teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in particular, have used Likert-type questionnaires. These include studies conducted by Hwang and Evans (1999); Kern (2006), Mashiya (2003) and Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011). In this study a 36 item questionnaire was developed and used as a method of data collection. The researcher adapted the questionnaire from various studies by carefully examining and selecting items relating to the three constructs of Ajzen's TPB (1991), namely, *Attitude*, *Subjective Norms* and *Perceived Behaviour Control*. Items selected and adapted included items from an inclusion questionnaire for educators conducted by Hwang & Evans, (2011) as well as items adapted from an *Inclusive Education (IE) Perception Questionnaire of an Exploratory Research* conducted in South Africa during 2004 (Nel et al, 2011). Other items relevant to the study include those of Kern (2006) and Mashiya (2003) who conducted a survey in South Africa on the attitudes of different groupings (black, white and coloured) of educators in South Africa. The final selection of items were captured onto the *Google Forms* server and a link was provided, by design, in order to gain access to the questionnaire. The questionnaire is available in Appendix Four of this thesis.

Table 3.1 (below) provides details of references (author's name, date of publication, page number as well as item numbers) of studies on inclusion from which items for this study were selected and adapted. The ticks (✓) indicate the biographical items that were included in the respective researches.

Table 3.1 References of researches related to the study's survey questionnaire

Items related to:	Hwang & Evans (1999:146)	Mashiya (2003:82)	Kern (2006:72)	Nel et al (2011:81)
Biographical Items				
Gender	✓	✓	✓	
Qualification		✓	✓	
Years of experience	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teaching level		✓	✓	✓
Training			✓	
The Attitudinal Constructs				
Policy implementation	5; 2		10; 33; 42	37; 43; 44; 102; 99
Educational background			1; 18;	54
Teacher Support	12; 22		6	28
Resources				39
Classroom management	9; 13; 15; 24	1; 2; 3-10		
Time	10; 16		19	
Training	11		2	25

3.3.2.3 The questionnaire grouped into constructs and scores collapsed

The questionnaire items were grouped into preliminary constructs as decided via the literature review and examination of the conceptual framework to extract information for understanding and interpretation purposes. Closed-ended questions which are usually considered more efficient and less time consuming for respondents were used and the instructions were clearly indicated at the

beginning of the questionnaire (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006:197). The first part of the questionnaire (numbered one to six) included tick-boxes to extract demographic and biographical information. The items requested information based on nationality, gender, teaching experience, qualification levels, teaching levels and training, etcetera. These items were used to contribute to discussions pertaining to the elements that may or may not affect attitudes of teachers. Items numbered seven to 35 were grouped according to the three constructs, *Attitude*, *Subjective Norms* and the *Perceived Behaviour Control* (Ajzen, 1991). Tables 3.2 below shows how these items in the questionnaire relate to the constructs of Ajzen's TPB (1991).

Each item was ranked on a Likert-type scale ranging from values one to five, one registering the lowest score and the most negative response while five being the highest score and the most positive. In other words, items were positively worded and reflected five different response options next to which participants had simply to check boxes indicating their level of agreement (strongly disagree, disagree, unsure, agree, strongly agree). Positive items were scored higher and scores were reversed for negative items. The maximum score that could be obtained for *Subjective Norms* is 55 (11x5) and the minimum is 11 (11x1). The *Attitudes* construct has a maximum score of 35 (7x5) and minimum of 7(7x1) while the *Perceived Behaviour Control* has a maximum score of 55 (11x5) and a minimum of 11 (11x1) (see Table 3.2 below). The statistical mean and median of a group of scores representing each construct were calculated to indicate whether teachers were favourable or unfavourable towards the construct. Teacher attitudes towards inclusion are reported as negative, uncertain or positive (discussed in more detail in a later topic).

Table 3.2: Items used for the analysis of the three constructs of Ajzen's TPB (1991)

Items	Description of Construct	Scoring/item
<p>7. All efforts should be made to include all students in the regular education classrooms</p> <p>8. Inclusion helps students with disabilities adjust socially.</p> <p>9. Inclusion helps students with disabilities improve academically.</p> <p>10. It is necessary to modify instruction and teaching styles to meet the needs of students with disabilities.</p> <p>11. Sufficient time and resources should be made available to implement inclusion in mainstream programmes.</p> <p>12. It is necessary to have formal qualifications to implement inclusive practices.</p> <p>13. An inclusive policy is necessary in every school</p> <p>29. All teachers should be adequately trained and qualified for the implementation of Inclusive Education</p> <p>30. Schools should receive more financial and technical support, infrastructures and practical guidelines.</p> <p>31. Regular Education and Special Education teachers should work collaboratively.</p> <p>32. Schools should provide sufficient in-service training for teachers wanting to enhance their knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Variables measure the Subjective Norms described by Ajzen's TPB as the support for desired behaviour, - a person's own estimate of the social norms or subjective norms to perform or not perform the target behaviour</p>	<p>likert scale</p> <p>1= strongly disagree 2=disagree; 3=unsure 4= agree 5= strongly agree</p> <p>Score/construct</p> <p>Maximum score= 55 (11x5) Minimum score= 11 (11x1)</p>
<p>14. Teachers are able to deal with classroom management in inclusive environments</p> <p>15. Collaborative teaching is important when you have a student/s with special needs in the classroom</p> <p>16. Students who are diagnosed with more severe disabilities such as autistic and mental disabilities need to be kept in special schools.</p> <p>17. Classroom management should not pose a challenge in the inclusion in mainstream classroom</p> <p>18. Inclusive practices are implemented successfully at schools</p> <p>19. Inclusion works well in countries where it has been implemented</p> <p>20. Teachers need guidelines on Inclusive Education implementation at schools</p>	<p>Variables measure the Attitude described by Ajzen's TPB as the personal experiences which measures how the issue, event, object makes you feel</p>	<p>likert scale</p> <p>1= strongly disagree 2=disagree; 3=unsure 4= agree 5= strongly agree</p> <p>Score/construct</p> <p>Maximum score= 35 (7x5) Minimum score= 7 (7x1)</p>
<p>21. My educational background has adequately prepared me to deal with an inclusion programme</p> <p>22. My school's policy makes provision for IE.</p> <p>23. The current ethos at my school considers barriers to learning</p> <p>24. I have sufficient time to deal with the demands of introducing inclusive practices in the curriculum.</p> <p>25. I have adequate time for students with learning disabilities</p> <p>26. I benefit professionally and personally from working in a collaborative team</p> <p>27. I have been sufficiently involved in the inclusion process in my classroom.</p> <p>28. I am knowledgeable about assistive devices, e.g. hearing aids, audio visual aids and other assisted devices.</p> <p>33. The school has empowered me in dealing with an inclusive environment</p> <p>34. I've gained more experience to teach students with disabilities in my classroom</p> <p>35. I feel ready and equipped to teach at inclusive schools in South Africa</p>	<p>Variables measure the Perceived Behaviour Control described by Ajzen's TPB as the prevailing knowledge, skills and training in the desired behaviour- the extent to which a person feels able to enact the behaviour, in other words the performance of the behaviour.</p>	<p>Likert scale</p> <p>1= strongly disagree 2=disagree; 3=unsure 4= agree 5= strongly agree</p> <p>Score/per construct</p> <p>Maximum score= 55 (11x5) Minimum score= 11 (11x1)</p>

As indicated in Table 3.2 (above), 11 items of the questionnaire relate to how a person understands and adopts the principles of inclusive education, also referred to as the *Subjective Norms* (Ajzen, 1991). Items in the questionnaire reflect those norms that were developed, accepted and adopted nationally and internationally through policies and documents on the implementation of inclusive education. This includes - the acceptance of the philosophy of inclusion; teachers' view on supportive environments; the training and re-training of skills; adaptation in curriculum; as well as provision made for funding and adequate resources. In other words, norms due to social pressures are being examined which are explained in South Africa's *White Paper 6, on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training* 6 and in the *UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education* (2009) (DoE, 2001; UNESCO, 2009).

Seven items numbered 14 to 20 in the questionnaire measured how a person felt overall, about the practices of inclusion based on personal experiences, also referred to as the *Attitude* construct Ajzen (1991). The assumption made from this group of items was that teachers were aware of inclusive practices and/or involved in inclusionary programmes. According to Ajzen (1991) these experiences may produce favourable or unfavourable *Attitudes* towards the *Behaviour* (implementation of inclusion). Previous studies (refer to the literature review in Chapter Two) undertaken to explore attitudes of South Africans based on personal experiences include those of Machi (2007); Mashiya (2003); Donahue and Bornman (2014); de Boer, Pijlb and Minnaerta (2011); Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarind (2011). These studies on attitudes also explored certain factors or concerns in of inclusion such as classroom management, knowledge and skills, working collaboratively, etc. necessary for the implementation of inclusion.

A further 11 items in the questionnaire measured the extent to which a person felt able to address and implement inclusive education. According to Ajzen (1991) items formulated to assess the strength of the behavioural beliefs and the evaluation of the outcome, are referred to as the *Perceived Behaviour Control* construct. Items were formulated to measure certain aspects of inclusive education to reflect attitudes based on the necessary knowledge, skills and practices required. These items were also intended to explore the elements that help to facilitate or impede the performance of the behaviour. Many previous studies included in their questionnaires items to determine how teachers would respond or to what extent teachers would support elements necessary for the implementation of inclusive education. For example, Hwang and Evans (2010:18) and Mashiya (2003:74) in their studies to examine teacher attitudes, used items in their questionnaire starting with '*I*' and '*My*' or with '*me*' included in the statement and according to Ajzen (1991) these items are aimed at producing findings which contribute to the intent or the will of the individual to perform the *Behaviour* (implementation of inclusive education). Similarly, the questionnaire in this study had similar types of items selected for the *Perceived Behavioural Control* construct aimed at exploring the willingness of teachers to implement inclusion in education.

3.3.2.4 Sampling for the survey questionnaire

Non-probability samples that can be selected quickly for internet surveys, work well for exploratory research (Sue & Ritter, 2012:11). Sue and Ritter (2012:2) further explain that if surveys are used in exploratory research designs then no attempt should be made to examine random sampling since the goal of the research would be to formulate problems and explore concepts rather than to test hypotheses. The population in this study was delimited to a homogenous group of subjects through inclusion/exclusion criteria. Included in the group were in-service teachers teaching in Omani schools, excluding all other nationalities except those from South Africa. In particular, the study focussed on general or regular teachers in pre-primary/kindergarten, primary/middle and secondary/high schools, teaching in mainstream, private and international, schools. The South African population was targeted in this research since it was in the interest of the researcher to conduct a study focussing on South African teachers. The researcher is a South African teaching in Oman and has become aware of challenges and concerns South African teachers face in implementing inclusive education. This approach is justified from a post-positivist's perspective where the researcher recognizes the importance of establishing teacher attitudes and conducting a study which is relevant to the researcher's reality. Understanding how the research affects you as a researcher is an essential part of the post-positivist approach (Ryan, 2006:18).

Presently there are 33 private and international schools listed in Oman catering for both Omani and non-Omani children, (Ministry of Education, Oman Educational Portal). South African expatriates teach in many of these international and private schools targeted largely for the expatriate community. A non-probability type of sampling which did not require any type of random selection from the population was more feasible for the study (Sue & Ritter, 2012:11). The reason for this choice of sampling is because the researcher deemed it necessary to gather as much information from as many South Africans that were available. In Oman there were a limited number of participants available and suitable for research. Therefore, both purposive sampling and convenience sampling were employed. South African teachers were targeted depending on their availability and willingness to participate.

The researcher approached a social network in Oman, South African Group in Oman (SAGO) to request email addresses of South African teachers. A good number of the South African community in Oman (approximately 185) are presently registered members to this group. The email addresses were available and obtainable upon request from the SAGO's mailing data base, of which the researcher is presently a member too. An initial list of 45 subjects, registered as teachers, were obtained and every person linked to an email address on the list was invited to participate in the survey. A sample (N=35) responded and their survey responses have been included in this study. This sample number represents a response rate of 78% which is deemed acceptable in the light of

other studies into the independent education sector where a response rate of 32% to 34% had been achieved (Du Toit, 2003:385; Squelch, 1997:130). Nevertheless, as indicated earlier in this chapter, it is acknowledged that this sample is small but was considered viable under the above-mentioned sampling circumstances for the study and for exploratory purposes.

3.3.3 Research ethics

The University of South Africa (UNISA) requires all their students to apply to an Ethics Committee of the University to obtain an ethics clearance certificate for any research conducted under UNISA's supervision (UNISA, 2014). The researcher has to comply with research procedures and has to ensure that no participant experiences discomfort, pain, physical or psychological problems/side-effects, persecution, stigmatisation or negative labelling that could arise during the course or as an outcome of the research undertaken (UNISA, 2014).

In this study, none of the above risks were foreseen. The email sent to the 45 prospective participants was an invitation to voluntarily partake in the study and it explained the nature and the purpose of the research. Clear guidelines regarding the anonymity, confidentiality and completion of the responses were explained and participants had to give their consent before starting the survey. The survey did not identify any names, school or institution, in other words anonymity was ensured. Participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence and were given the opportunity to view the findings of the study.

3.3.4 Data collection procedures and capturing

The survey was administered over a period of three weeks and the information was collected and collated in a very convenient and streamlined way via an online server, *Google Forms* (URL, <http://www.google.com/forms/about/>). The online link provided by *Google Forms* made it easy for surveys to be accessed and completed. Participants accessed the survey via the link provided for in the email and retrieved the basic instruction regarding the nature and procedures of the survey. Once all the required fields indicated on the questionnaire were completed and the participant clicked on the 'send' button, the data was immediately computed and processed automatically onto a spreadsheet in *Google Forms*. Two weeks after the first email was sent, the researcher sent a second email to encourage greater participation and to remind participants to complete and submit surveys before the online link would be locked for submissions on a given date. This gave all participants an opportunity to make any changes or complete incomplete questionnaires. Three weeks after the first email was sent to the group of South Africans, a copy of the data on *Google Forms* spreadsheet was pasted onto a Microsoft Excel document which allowed the researcher to

check and verify that all the information and data were computed correctly via a process of data cleaning.

3.3.5 Characteristics of the sampled teachers

This section provides an overview of the sample obtained from the biographical data in the completed survey questionnaire. Reporting is in terms of frequencies and percentages for each item. The items focused on are: gender of the participants, highest teaching qualification held, years of experience; level or phase taught; training received to deal with learners with special needs. Figure 3.1 (below) represents information on the highest teaching qualification held by male and female teachers.

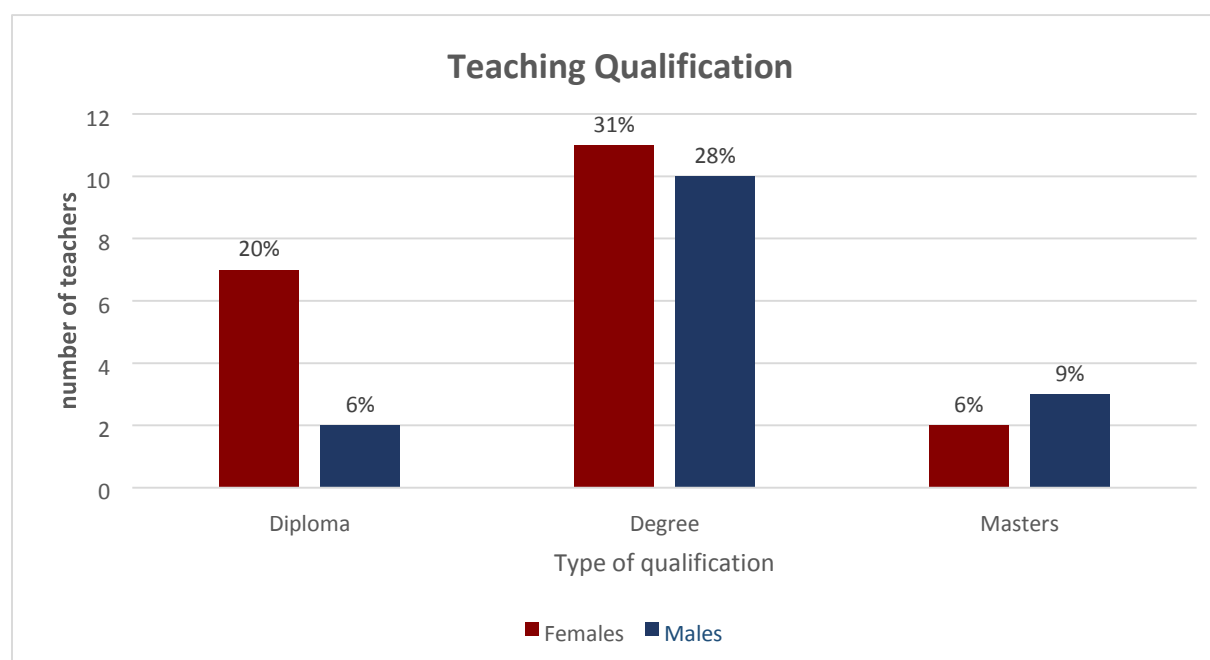


Figure 3.1 Highest teaching qualification held by teachers

Twenty females and 15 males participated in the study. Figure 3.1 (above) illustrates the highest teaching qualifications held by male and female research participants. According to Figure 3.1 the majority of the sampled teachers (N=21) (59%) held a Bachelor's Degree and five (15%) held a Master's degree. Only nine (26%) teachers were in possession of a Teaching Diploma.

Figure 3.2 (below) illustrates the years of teaching experience of male and female teachers. According to the data displayed, a total of 29 (82%) of teachers, 15 males and 14 females, had more than 15 years teaching experience and only six (18%) female teachers had less than 15 years of teaching experience. The researcher recognises that most of the participants were more experienced teachers. and according to previous studies conducted, it shows that teachers with more years of experience often found it challenging to adapt to inclusive practices; reorienting teachers to new ways of educating learners after many years in the profession remains a significant challenge due to

attitudes that were more ingrained and/or because teachers did not receive any training in inclusion (Donahue & Bornman, 2014; Alahbabi, 2009; Dukmak, 2013).

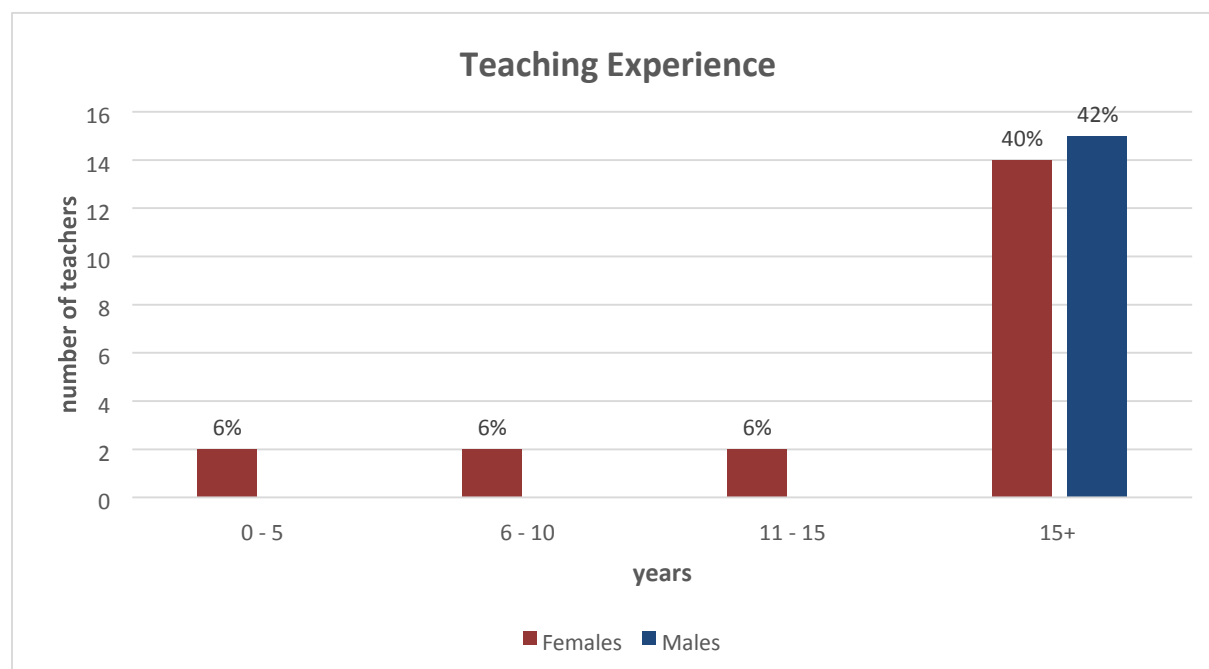


Figure 3.2: Teaching experience in years

Figure 3.3 (below) indicates the teaching level of male and female teachers. These teaching levels represent the different phases in schools based on age-groups. The questionnaire also provided an option for participants to indicate any other form of teaching level under the 'other' category.

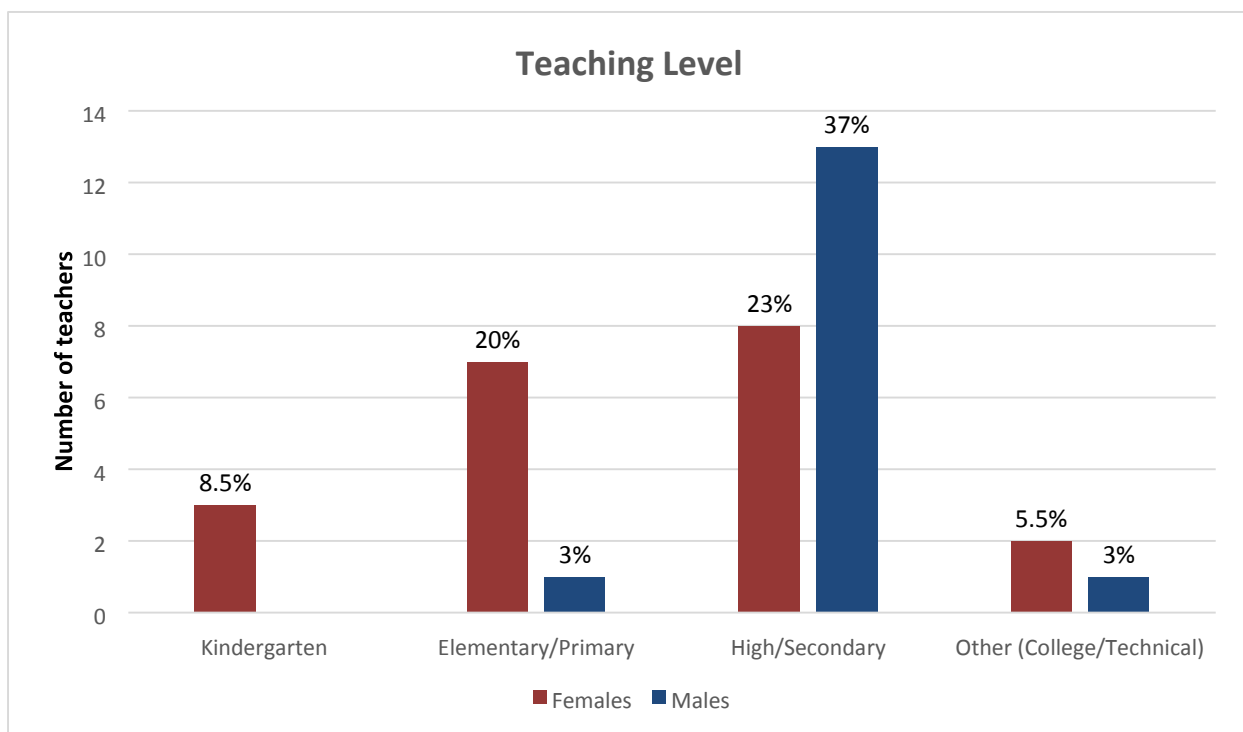


Figure 3.3: Teaching Level held by research subjects

Figure 3.3 illustrates that 21 (60%) teachers, eight female and 13 male teachers, taught in high/secondary schools. There was one male who taught in elementary/primary and one male who taught at a college/technical school whereas no males taught in kindergarten. Two (3%) females taught at college/technical level and seven females in elementary/primary level and three at kindergarten level. Twenty (68.5%) male and female teachers taught older groups of students (high/secondary or at colleges/technical schools) while 11 (31.5%) male and female teachers taught the younger group of students (primary/elementary or kindergarten). It is observed that a bigger percentage of participants teaching older groups of students is represented in this study and according to studies conducted previously, there is indication of teachers teaching older groups of students and faced with content based curricula, who tend to hold less positive attitudes towards inclusionary practices (Alahbabi, 2009). Similar patterns might follow in this study.

Figure 3.4 (below) illustrates the number of male and female teachers who indicated they received some form of training in dealing with children with special needs. Nine (26%) teachers, seven males and two females received some form of training while 26 (74%) teachers, 13 males and 13 females did not receive any. As such, in spite of the majority having much experience, training in special needs was not evident of this experience.

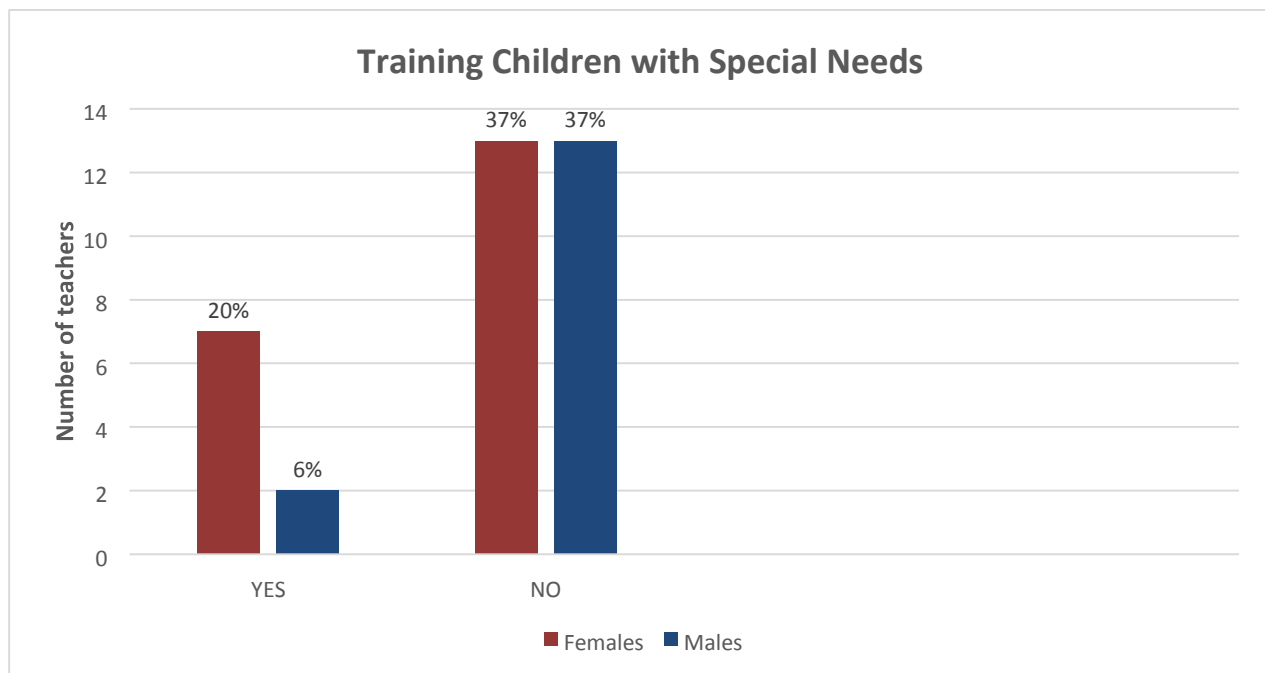


Figure 3.4: Teachers who received training in dealing with children with special needs

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The following sub-sections explain how the survey data were analysed. Descriptive statistics (3.4.1) were employed to provide statistical summaries of the data. A brief explanation follows on how the three constructs of Ajzen's TPB (1991) (3.4.1.1) will be summarised. Procedures to explore emerging patterns across theoretical constructs (3.4.2) affecting the implementation of inclusive education are also explained. The nature and reasons for employing these statistical procedures are discussed in these sub-sections.

3.4.1 Descriptive statistics

The *Web Centre for Social Research Methods* describes descriptive statistics as a means of providing simple summaries about the sample and about the observations that have been made; '*descriptive statistics simply describes what is or what the data shows*'. In order to employ descriptive statistics, the study usually has one or more guiding research questions and is generally not driven by structured research hypotheses (Sue & Ritter, 2012:2).

The aim of this research is firstly, to describe and summarise three attitude-constructs (*Subjective Norms, Attitudes and Perceived Behavioural Control*) (see Table 3.1 above) based on the quantitative data collected from samples in the questionnaire. Secondly, the study is aimed at exploring developing patterns of attitudinal behaviours across constructs. These patterns result from

background measures based on the characteristics of participants which the researcher believes may be of interest for the *Behaviour* under investigation (Ajzen, 1991). Descriptive statistics have been employed for this exploratory research design based upon its small sample size (N=35) and recognition of the limited studies in this area of research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:28) prompting the need for exploratory research.

3.4.1.1 Descriptive statistics measuring Ajzen's TPB constructs

Data from the 35 item questionnaire was grouped and summarized according to each of the three constructs shown in Table 3.2 above. The data was statistically manipulated and summaries were formulated by means of presentations limited to frequency distributions and summary statistics, such as percentages, frequencies, means (*M*), medians (*Mdn*) and standard deviations (*SD*) and were then used to describe participant responses to individual items as well as items grouped together within constructs.

3.4.1.2 Descriptive statistics of themes measuring latent constructs

Ajzen's (1991:182) original theory focused on three attitude constructs aimed at determining the *intention* to perform a *behaviour* (act). However, Ajzen (1991:182) realized that the performance of the *behaviour* also depended on non-motivational factors which represents people's actual control over the *behaviour*. For example, the extent that a person has required opportunities, resources, skills, cooperation of others, etc. and together with the *intention* to perform the *behaviour*, should contribute to the success of the *act*. Findings aimed at exploring emerging patterns across the various themes, described by Ajzen (1991) as non-motivational factors, are also referred to as latent (underlying) constructs in research. These underlying constructs are theoretical in nature which cannot be observed directly and therefore cannot be measured directly either (Byrnes, 1998:4). Items across Ajzen's (1991) three constructs were linked together, based upon common threads, to measure four latent (underlying) constructs, namely, *teacher support*, *teacher training*, *time* and *classroom management*. Similar items were used in previous studies (refer to the literature review in Chapter Two) to determine the effect these constructs have on teacher attitudes. The biographical data- gender, years of experience, teaching level, and teacher training, were used to explore emerging patterns related to these underlying constructs. In this study, items 15, 26, 30 and 31 were grouped together as they were perceived to represent elements related to the construct, *teacher support*; items 11, 24 and 25 were grouped for the *time* construct; items 21, 28, 29 and 32 for *training* and items 14 and 17 for *classroom management*. Even though these measures could not be statistically tested due to the small sample size (N=35), the post-positivist perspective makes allowance for the researcher to see the whole picture, to take a distanced view or an overview of the research problem (Taylor, 2013:2).

3.5 METHODOLOGICAL NORMS

This section deals with the analytical quality of the measure (instrument) by addressing both the validity (3.5.1) and the reliability (3.5.2) of its design.

3.5.1 Validity

Macmillan and Schumacher (2006:179) describe validity as the judgement of the appropriateness of a measure that results from scores generated. Validity is also described as the degree to which evidence and theory supports the interpretations of these test scores, vital to the measure's design (DeVilles, 1996:46). In other words, validity is directly concerned with the theoretical relationship of a score on some scale to other variables.

This study employed a questionnaire as a measure to make observations regarding the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. The design of the measure was constructed based on a theoretical framework that measures attitude-constructs, mainly abstract in nature (Ajzen, 1991:206). The researcher deemed it necessary to assure both the content and the construct validity of the measure's design. To ensure construct validity the study was guided by the theoretical conceptualisation of Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (1991:2006) which provided clear guidelines and characteristics of the design for the three constructs to be measured. Crocker and Algina, (1986:235) also argue that one must develop items, that serve as representations of the construct. Questionnaires employed in previous studies aimed at determining attitudes contributed to the formulation of constructs for the present study some of which included measurements used by Salend (1999); Hwang & Evans (1999); Mashiya (2003); Kerns (2006) and Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011). A selection of items related to attitudes were carefully selected and adapted to form the three groups of items as described by Ajzen's TPB (1991).

Checking whether or not the items on a given measure accurately reflect the theoretical domain of the latent (underlying) construct it claims to measure, also called content validity, is vital to maximise appropriateness of the measure (DeVilles, 1996:50). The researcher studied policy documents such as South Africa's, *White Paper 6* (DoE, 2001) as well as the *National Report of the Sultanate of Oman* (2008) to ensure that items selected reflect concepts based on inclusive educational principles. The researcher also approached two educators familiar with the concepts of inclusive education and a Special Needs Team Co-ordinator at a school, to review the list of items and to make suggestions and recommendations about items that had to be omitted, included or altered. The questionnaire was adjusted accordingly.

3.5.2 Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures; the extent to which measurements are repeatable and free from error (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006:183). According to Ajzen (1991:180) there is no standard TPB questionnaire to ensure the reliability of the tool but in a formative research it is required to construct a questionnaire suitable for the behaviour and population of interest. *“If beliefs are to be assessed, they must be elicited in context from the representative sample of the research population,”* (Ajzen, 1991:180).

To test whether or not questions measure the same concept, an internal consistency check is used and the most common way to demonstrate this is by using the Cronbach's alpha statistic (Jones & Rattray, 2007:237). This statistic employs inter-item correlations to determine whether constituent items are measuring the same domain or in this study the same construct. Cronbach's alpha has a range of values between 0.00 and 1.00 and a value of > 0.7 is considered acceptable (Jones & Rattray, 2007:237).

This study reports Cronbach's alpha statistic for the separate constructs within the questionnaire rather than for the entire questionnaire. Item-total correlations were used to assess internal consistency to determine whether items that were intended to measure the same underlying concept correlated with the total score from the construct. More discussion will follow on the analysis and implications of results of these test results in Chapter Four.

Furthermore, Ajzen (1991:181) strongly recommends a pilot study and testing to be conducted for internal consistency when constructing a questionnaire. Questionnaires designed to directly assess the theory's constructs should be validated. However, due to certain confines of this study, such as the limited scope of research in the region (the Gulf) and in this area of study (inclusive education) as well as its small sample size ($n=35$), a pilot study was not viable. The researcher deems both the pilot study and testing for consistency essential for future research especially when larger samples are employed and to be able to draw conclusions, formulate theories, and make assertions about the generalizability of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 28).

3.6 SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter provided an explanation of the post-positivist approach guiding this study; an exploratory research which was non-experimental in design; a survey aimed at quantifying data for statistical purposes, descriptive in nature. A description of the instrument used and the procedures of conducting the research were explained. The chapter also described the statistical procedures used to determine findings of Ajzen's (1991) three constructs and developing patterns, discussed within themes, across these constructs. This was followed by short descriptive summaries which provided biographical information of subjects. Finally the chapter concluded discussing the methodological norms, reliability and validity, important to research.

In the next chapter, findings pertaining to the data from the survey which were statistically analysed through descriptive statistics, will be reported.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings on attitudes towards inclusion from the survey questionnaire administered to South African expatriate teachers in Oman. In section 4.2.1 a recap of the teacher descriptions discussed and illustrated in Chapter Three is provided. This is followed by findings on Ajzen's (1991) three attitudinal-constructs (4.2.3) as explicated in Chapters Two and Three and then emerging patterns across items which are perceived to be related to latent constructs (4.3), are also considered.

4.2 FINDINGS FROM DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

In this section, descriptions of the research participants (4.2.1) as first presented in Chapter 3 are briefly recapped and then an explanation of how and why the data was regrouped (4.2.2) for measurement purposes are given. The *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) was employed to measure data and provide statistical summaries of individual items and of those grouped together related to Ajzen's (1991) three attitudinal-constructs. These summaries provide a comparative overview of the three constructs (4.2.3) as well as the analyses of individual constructs (4.2.3.1), (4.2.3.2) and (4.2.3.3).

4.2.1 Description of teachers as research participants

To recap from Chapter Three - 35 participants, 15 (42.9%) males and 20 (57.1%) females all of South African nationality consented to take part in the online survey. Nine (25.7%) South African teachers have diplomas, 21 (60.0%) have bachelor's degrees and 5 (14.3%) have Master's degree. Teaching level responses indicate that three (8.6%) participants teach at kindergarten level, while seven (20%) teach at primary/elementary level, 22 (62.9%) at secondary/high school and three (8.6%) are either at college or technical school. The number of years of experience shows that 29 (82.9%) participants indicated that they had more than 15 years of experience while two participants (5.7%) had 0-5 years, another two (5.7%) had 6-10 years and another two (5.7%) 11-15 years of experience.

4.2.2 Items regrouped for statistical purposes

For analytical purposes the researcher regrouped certain items where sample numbers were too small to make notable observations. Table 4.1 (below) shows how selected items from the questionnaire have been regrouped. These items will be studied more closely when examining developing patterns in the data as well as their potential contributions to underlying constructs perceived to affect attitudes of teachers.

Table 4.1: Items regrouped for statistical purposes

Item regrouped	Item	Sample (N)	Frequency
Teaching level	Kindergarten & Primary (Lower level)	10	28.6%
	Secondary/Other (College/Technical) (Higher level)	25	71.4%
Years of teaching experience	0-5; 5-10; 11-15 (0-15 years)	6	17.1%
	More than 15 years (15 + years)	29	82.9%

Table 4.1 shows the regrouping of items selected from the questionnaire. The four options linked to *level of teaching* have been regrouped into two. The first group includes a summary of 10 (28.6 %) subjects teaching in Kindergarten/primary/elementary, now classified as *lower level* teaching and 25 (71.4 %) participants teach at secondary/high/ technical, classified as *higher level*. This regrouping was based on teaching younger children against older age groups. Teachers who indicated under the '*other*' category private colleges and technical schools, have been included in the older age group or *higher level* category.

Years of experience has also been regrouped which reflects that six (17.1 %) participants have less than 15 years of experience and 29 (82.9 %) have more than 15 years of experience. Evidently, most South African expatriates in this study are experienced teachers based on the data provided.

Furthermore, scales on the five point Likert scale were collapsed in order to classify findings in an easier and more meaningful way. The categories *strongly disagree* and *disagree*, rated one and two respectively on the Likert scale, were grouped together to represent *negative responses* whilst the

response options *agree* and *strongly agree*, rated four and five, were grouped to represent *positive responses*. Thus findings of data will be reported as negative (1-2), neutral (3) and positive (4-5).

4.2.3 Descriptive statistics related to constructs of Ajzen's TPB (1991)

Items in the survey questionnaire were grouped (as discussed in Chapter three) according to the three constructs, *Attitude*, *Subjective Norms* and *Perceived Behaviour Control* outlined in Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (1991). Table 4.2 (below) provides descriptive statistics of constructs based upon the total score per construct. The minimum and maximum score, as well as the median, mean and standard deviation of scores per construct are shown on the table. The total score for each construct is based on the total number of items per construct multiplied by the maximum score (5) on the Likert-scale. The total score or maximum value per construct is as follows – *Subjective Norms* is 55 (11x5), *Attitude* is 35 (7x5) and *Perceived Behaviour Control* is 55 (11x5). The lowest and highest score any individual obtained on the Likert-scale per construct are indicated by the minimum and maximum values, respectively.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics of constructs based upon the total score per construct

Construct	Sample (N)	Total Score	Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Subjective Norms -Total Score (55)	35	55	36	55	47	46.6	4.8
Attitudes - Total Score (35)	35	35	15	29	23	22.7	3.3
Perceived Behaviour Control - Total Score (55)	35	55	16	51	28	29.1	8.6

According to Ajzen (1991) the construct, *Subjective Norm*, measures the support for the belief of inclusive education. Results of Table 4.2 reflect that teachers indicated very strong agreement and support for the social norms and fundamental principles of inclusive education, ($M=46.6$; $SD=4.8$). The *Attitude* construct, aimed at examining teacher experiences in inclusive education, shows a lower mean score ($M=22.7$; $SD=3.3$) whilst the confidence level perceived to perform the behaviour, represented by the *Perceived Behaviour Control* construct, shows an even lower mean score ($M=29.1$) with a greater dispersion of responses around the mean ($SD=8.6$). The *Subjective Norm* construct reflects a higher mean average than those of the *Attitude* construct and the *Perceived*

Behaviour Control. In other words, the results indicate that the will to perform the behaviour was not as convincing as the belief in the fundamental principles of inclusion. The higher mean score ($M=46.4$; $SD=4.8$) recorded for *Subjective Norms* indicates that at the attitudinal behavioural level teachers supported the beliefs or principles of inclusion but based on their experiences, knowledge and skills depicted by the *Attitude* and *Perceived Behaviour Control* measures, teachers were likely more cautious about its implementation. Hence, the lower mean averages of values of 22.7 and 29.1 respectively for these constructs. This sample of South African teachers in Oman held more positive attitudes towards the principles of inclusion in comparison to its implementation based on the measures related to personal experiences, knowledge and skills.

In the sub-sections which follow the frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations for each of the items compiling the three theoretical constructs discussed above, are scrutinised in detail.

4.2.3.1 Descriptive statistics for the Subjective Norm construct

Table 4.3 (below) provides information related to the individual construct, *Subjective Norms*. As indicated in Chapter Three, eleven items formed part of the *Subjective Norms* construct in the questionnaire. Frequencies of the five-point Likert scale indicated as combined or collapsed scores belonging to three categories (negative, neutral and positive) and together with its percentages, means and standard deviations (calculated by the SPSS package) are shown for each item. Comparisons between items are made in order to provide a better understanding of how teachers responded to the various social norms of inclusion. The total frequency summary for the entire construct is also indicated at the end of Table 4.3 which has previously been discussed in 4.2.3 above.

Table 4.3: Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for the construct,**Subjective Norms**

Item	Sample (N)	Negative (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Positive (4-5)	Mean Score (M)	Std. deviation (SD)
7. All efforts should be made to include all students in the regular education classrooms	35	4 11.4%	4 11.4%	27 77.2%	3.9	1.0
8. Inclusion helps students with disabilities adjust socially	35	1 2.9%	3 8.5%	31 88.6%	4.2	0.7
9. Inclusion helps students with disabilities improve academically	35	3 8.6%	9 25.7%	23 65.7%	3.7	0.9
10. It is necessary to modify instruction and teaching styles to meet the needs of students with disabilities.	35	2 5.7%	2 5.7%	31 88.6%	4.3	0.8
11. Sufficient time and resources should be made available to implement inclusion in mainstream programmes.	35	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	35 100%	4.5	0.5
12. It is necessary to have formal qualifications to implement inclusive practices	35	7 20.0%	4 11.4%	24 68.6%	3.8	1.2
13. An inclusive policy is necessary in every school	35	4 11.5%	4 11.4%	27 77.1%	3.9	1.0
29. All teachers should be adequately trained and qualified for the implementation of Inclusive Education	35	1 2.9%	2 5.7%	32 91.4%	4.4	0.8
30. Schools should receive more financial and technical support, infrastructures and practical guidelines	35	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	35 100%	4.6	0.5
31. Regular Education and Special Education teachers should work collaboratively	35	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	35 100%	4.6	0.5
32. Schools should provide sufficient in-service training for teachers wanting to enhance their knowledge and skills.	35	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	35 100%	4.7	0.5
Subjective Norms - Total Score= (55)					46.6	4.8

Table 4.3 shows that most items represented in this construct obtained frequencies with mean scores between 3.7 and 4.7 on the Likert scale. In other words, these scores represent more positive attitudes. The highest mean score ($M=4.7$; $SD = .5$) is item 32 which indicates all teachers (100%)

were in agreement and positive towards the belief that schools should provide sufficient in-service training for teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills. Likewise, items 11, 30 and 31 reflect frequency percentages of 100% distributed along the four and five categories on the Likert scale for each of the respective items. Teachers responded in favour to factors (evident in the literature review discussed in Chapter two) such as the provision of time, resources, financial support, technical support and teacher collaboration which are necessary for inclusive education implementation. At the other end of the scale, the lowest mean score recorded for this set of data ($M=3.7$; $SD=.09$), indicates teachers (25.7%) were more uncertain towards the support for the belief that inclusive education helped children with difficulties improve academically. Items seven, 12 and 13 with means of ($M=3.9$; $SD=1.0$), ($M=3.8$; $SD=1.2$) and ($M=3.9$; $SD=1.0$) respectively indicate some negative to neutral attitudes compared to those from other items in this construct. Results of these items show less agreement amongst teachers with regards to policies related to- the benefits of inclusion of all children into classrooms; the necessity of obtaining formal training; as well as the belief that all schools should have an inclusive policy.

Overall, teachers showed more positive than negative attitudes towards the norms of inclusive education. As reported in a previous discussion, the *Subjective Norms* construct reports a total mean score of 46.6; ($SD=4.8$) which indicates more positive attitudes of teachers towards the social norms related to inclusive education while only a small percentage perceived it negatively. Although most teachers supported inclusion principles favourably, some results also indicate negative views, more specifically, with regards to the benefits of inclusion for children with learning difficulties.

4.2.3.2 Descriptive statistics for the Attitude construct

Ajzen (1991) describes the *Attitude* construct towards certain behaviours as a person's overall evaluation of the behaviour based on personal experience. Table 4.4 (below) comprises of a selection of items of the survey carefully selected and adapted from previous studies (see discussion in Chapter three) and provides frequencies, together with their percentages of responses divided into three categories (negative, neutral and positive). Mean scores and standard deviations, calculated by the SPSS statistical programme, for each item are also provided in the last two columns on the right hand side of Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 represents findings as they relate to teachers' experiences in schools. The highest mean score ($M=4.7$; $SD=.5$) reflects a 97% positive response rate confirming teachers' need for guidelines on inclusion. The mean score ($M=4.1$) and standard deviation ($SD=.8$) highlight the importance of collaborative teaching. Most teachers (86%) experienced working collaboratively as being a positive experience when dealing with students with special needs in the classroom. The lowest score ($M=2.1$; $SD=.9$) recorded for this construct relates to teachers' negativity to deal with classroom

management in an inclusive education environment. Eighty-three percent of teachers tend to agree that inclusive education posed a challenge in classroom management in mainstream schools as opposed to only 11% who agreed that inclusive education did not pose much of a challenge in classrooms. This low score reflects the negative attitudes held by teachers and also disagreement that classroom management did not pose a challenge in mainstream inclusion. However, a slightly more positive view is held with regards to teachers actually dealing and coping with classroom management. This is reflected in item 14, which reports that 43% felt they could cope with inclusion in the classroom against 40% who felt they could not or held negative attitudes. Item 14 has a mean score with varied responses ($M = 3.1$; $SD=1.2$). More negative attitudes are also observed in item 16 with 54.3% who basically agreed that students with severe learning barriers should be kept in special schools. Teachers (48.6%) with mean score ($M=3.4$; $SD=.8$) in item 19, were uncertain whether inclusion worked well in countries especially where inclusive education had been implemented.

Table 4.4: Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for the construct, Attitudes

Item	Sample (N)	Negative (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Positive (4-5)	Mean (M)	Standard deviation (SD)
14. Teachers are able to deal with classroom management in inclusive environments	35	14 40%	6 17.1%	15 42.8%	3.2	1.2
15. Collaborative teaching is important when you have a student/s with special needs in the classroom	35	2 5.7%	3 8.6%	30 85.7%	4.1	0.8
16. Students who are diagnosed with more severe disabilities such as autistic and mental disabilities do not need to be kept in special schools.	35	19 54.3%	10 28.6%	6 17.2%	2.4	1.1
17. Classroom management should not pose a challenge in the inclusion in mainstream classroom	35	29 82.9%	2 5.7%	4 11.4%	2.1	0.9
18. Inclusive practices are implemented successfully at schools	35	16 28.5%	17 48.6%	8 22.9%	2.9	1.0
19. Inclusion works well in countries where it has been implemented	35	4 11.4%	17 48.6%	14 40%	3.4	0.8
20. Teachers need guidelines on Inclusive Education implementation at schools	35	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	34 97.1%	4.7	0.5
Attitude - Total Score (35)					22.7	3.3

Overall, findings of the *Attitude* construct, based on teachers' personal experiences, report a total mean score of 22.7 and standard deviation of 3.3. Results indicate more negative to neutral attitudes based on personal experiences towards the actual *Behaviour* (act) or implementation of inclusion.

4.2.3.3 Descriptive statistics for the Perceived Behaviour Control construct

Table 4.5 (below) consists of a selection of items representing the construct *Perceived Behaviour Control*. Ajzen (1991:206) describes the *Perceived Behaviour Control* construct as the extent to which a person feels able to enact the *Behaviour*. It has two aspects- how much a person has control over the behaviour and how confident a person feels about being able to perform or not perform the *Behaviour*. To explore these aspects, findings related to teachers' background knowledge, skills and their readiness and willingness to implement inclusive education were examined. The table provides frequencies, together with its percentages of responses divided into three categories (negative, neutral and positive). Mean scores and standard deviations for each item are also provided. The total score provides descriptive statistics for the whole construct.

Findings in Table 4.5 reflect more negative responses compared to the *Subjective Norms* and *Attitude* constructs. Most items, except for item 21 and 26, have mean scores below the neutral value of 3 on the Likert scale. The most positive mean score recorded ($M=3.7$; $SD=1.2$) expressed by 74% of subjects was in item 26 - teachers express their agreement for the belief that they benefit professionally and personally from working in collaborative teams. At the other end of the scale, the lowest mean score ($M=2.1$; $SD=1.0$) in item 33 as well as the mean scores of 2.2; ($SD=1.0$) and 2.2; ($SD=.8$) of items 24 and 25 respectively, reflect the most negative views held by teachers – 77% indicated schools do not empower them in dealing with inclusionary practices and 83% indicated they do not have sufficient time to adapt curriculum towards inclusive practices. According to findings, 57% responded negatively towards been sufficiently involved in inclusionary programmes in the classroom and 66% disagreed that their schools implement inclusionary policies. Another noteworthy finding is that almost 49% teachers felt they were not ready to step into inclusive environments while 29% were unsure or held neutral views about being able and ready to teach in inclusive schools. Only 23% indicated some confidence to deal with inclusionary practices at schools.

Table 4.5: Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for the construct, Perceived Behaviour Control

Item	Sample (N))	Negative (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Positive (4-5)	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
21. My educational background has adequately prepared me to deal with an inclusion programme	35	15 42.85%	5 14.3%	15 42.85%	3.0	1.4
22. My school's policy makes provision for IE	35	23 65.7%	5 14.3%	7 20%	2.4	1.2
23. The current ethos at my school considers barriers to learning	35	17 48.6%	6 17.1%	12 34.3%	2.8	1.0
24. I have sufficient time to deal with the demands of introducing inclusive practices in the curriculum.	35	29 82.9%	2 5.7%	4 11.4%	2.2	1.0
25. I have adequate time for students with learning disabilities	35	27 77.1%	4 11.45%	4 11.45%	2.2	0.8
26. I benefit professionally and personally from working in a collaborative team	35	7 20%	2 5.7%	26 74.3%	3.7	1.2
27. I have been sufficiently involved in the inclusion process in my classroom.	35	20 57.2%	6 17.1%	9 25.7	2.7	1.2
28. I am knowledgeable about assistive devices, e.g. hearing aids, audio visual aids and other assisted devices	35	23 65.7%	3 8.6%	9 25.7%	2.6	1.4
33. The school has empowered me in dealing with an inclusive environment	35	27 77.1%	4 11.45%	4 11.45%	2.1	1.0
34. I've gained more experience to teach students with learning difficulties in my classroom	35	19 54.3%	4 11.45%	12 34.25%	2.8	1.2
35. I feel ready and equipped to teach at inclusive schools in South Africa	35	17 48.6%	10 28.6%	8 22.8%	2.7	1.2
Perceived Behaviour Control - Total Score (55)					29.1	8.6

Overall, the most negative views were expressed in this construct. This is evident in the total mean score of 29.1; ($SD=8.6$). Teachers in this study seem to indicate little confidence based on responses to implement inclusive education. Most of their negativity or unwillingness appears to be based on findings indicating the reluctance of schools to make provision for inclusion; teachers not being empowered at schools; teachers not feeling equipped or knowledgeable about inclusion practices and devices; and the lack of time to include inclusive practices in the curriculum.

4.3 EXPLORING ITEMS AND LATENT CONSTRUCTS

Ajzen's (1991:182) original theory focused on three attitude constructs aimed at determining the *intention* to perform the *Behaviour* (act). However, Ajzen (1991:182) realized that the performance of the *behaviour* also depended on non-motivational factors which represent people's actual control over the *behaviour*. For example, the extent that a person has required opportunities, resources, skills, cooperation of others, etc. and together with the *intention* to perform the *behaviour*, should contribute to the success of the *act*.

The following group of findings is aimed at examining emerging patterns across the various items, described by Ajzen (1991) as non-motivational factors, also referred to as latent (underlying) constructs in research. These underlying constructs are theoretical in nature which cannot be observed directly and therefore cannot be measured directly either, especially due to the size of the sample in this study (Byrnes, 1998:4). Four underlying constructs examined in previous researches and highlighted in Chapter Two, were identified for this study – *teacher support*, *time*, *training* and *classroom management*.

4.3.1 Describing the latent construct, *teacher support*

Table 4.6 (below) shows an overview of how emerging patterns evident in items which contribute to the latent construct of *teacher support*. Items 15, 26, 30 and 31 have been grouped together as they are perceived to represent elements related to the construct, *teacher support*. Previous studies using similar items to determine how teachers felt about support in inclusive environments include those from Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011:83-84). Results from Nel et al, (2011:84) report positive attitudes for the support of teacher training and classroom support and they emphasised teachers' dependency on specialised support for effective inclusive education implementation.

All four statistical groups of data (gender, teaching experience, teaching level and teacher training) are included for each of the four items (15, 26, 30 and 31). Frequencies and percentages for the

four items per group indicate the negative, neutral, and positive responses. Mean scores and standard deviations, calculated by the SPSS programme, for each item are also provided in the last two columns on the right hand side of Table 4.6 (below).

In Table 4.6 (below) items 15, 30 and 31 measure the *Subjective Norm* construct and results indicate that most teachers were in agreement and favourable with collaboration and teacher support. Across all four groups there appears to be fairly similar measures of support for items 15, 30 and 31. However, only item 15 indicates a slight difference in attitude; teachers with teaching experience 0-15 years (67%) shared greater enthusiasm with regards to collaborative teaching compared to those with more than 15 years of experience (90%). Overall, the mean scores of Items 15, 30 and 31 ($M=4.1$; $SD=.8$), ($M=4.6$; $SD=.5$) and ($M=4.6$; $SD=.5$) respectively seem to compare favourably and these scores indicate more positive than negative views for teachers' support in classrooms.

Item 26 relates to the *Perceived Behaviour Control* measure which according to Ajzen (1991) reflects the extent to which a person feels able to enact the behaviour. It also reflects the confidence level a person has about being able to perform or not perform the behaviour. The mean score ($M=3.7$; $SD=1.2$) for item 26 is lower than the other three. Across all the items - gender, teaching level, teaching experience and teacher training, most teachers indicate confidence to the benefits of collaboration and supportive roles in inclusive environments.

At the other end of the scale, seven (20%) teachers expressed less confidence to the benefits of collaborative and supportive roles. Also interesting in the item, *teacher support*, findings show that 20% teachers who actually received some training in inclusive education held negative attitudes to *teacher support*. The assumption is that teacher training should produce more positive attitudes towards the general philosophy of inclusive education (de Boer, Pijlb & Minnaerta, 2011:334) and in view of the fact that none of the teachers indicated strong disagreement across all the items, it would be interesting to understand why these teachers displayed negative attitudes.

Table 4.6: Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations related *teacher support*

Latent Construct	Item	Items related to		Sample N	Negative (0-2)	Neutral (3)	Positive (4-5)	Mean score/ item (M)	Standard deviation (SD)
Teacher support	15. Collaborative teaching is important when you have a student/s with special needs in the classroom. <i>Subjective Norm</i>	Gender	Male	16	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	14 (88%)	4.1	0.8
			Female	19	1 (5%)	2 (11%)	16 (84%)		
		Teaching experience	0-15 years	6	-	2 (33%)	4 (67%)		
			15+ years	29	2 (7%)	1 (3%)	26 (90%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	8 (80%)		
			Higher	25	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	22 (88%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	8 (80%)		
			NO	25	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	22 (88%)		
	26. I benefit professionally and personally from working in a collaborative team <i>Perceived Behaviour Control</i>	Gender	Male	16	2 (12%)	-	14 (88%)	3.7	1.2
			Female	19	5 (26%)	2 (11%)	12 (63%)		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	1 (17%)	1 (17%)	4 (67%)		
			15+ years	29	6 (21%)	1 (3%)	22 (76%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	8 (80%)		
			Higher	25	6 (24%)	1 (4%)	18 (72%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	2 (20%)	1 (10%)	7 (70%)		
			NO	25	5 (20%)	1 (4%)	19 (76%)		
	30. Schools should receive more financial and technical support, infrastructures and practical guidelines. <i>Subjective Norm</i>	Gender	Male	6	-	-	6 (100%)	4.6	0.5
			Female	19	-	-	19(100%)		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	-	-	6 (100%)		
			15+ years	29	-	-	19(100%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	-	-	10(100%)		
			Higher	25	-	-	25(100%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	-	-	10(100%)		
			NO	25	-	-	25(100%)		
	31. Regular Education and Special Education teachers should work collaboratively <i>Subjective Norm</i>	Gender	Male	6	-	-	10(100%)	4.6	0.5
			Female	19	-	-	25(100%)		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	-	-	10(100%)		
			15+ years	25	-	-	25(100%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	-	-	10(100%)		
			Higher	25	-	-	25(100%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	-	-	10(100%)		
			No	25	-	-	25(100%)		

4.3.2 Describing the latent construct, *time*

Table 4.7 (below) shows an overview of how emerging patterns evident in items contribute to the latent construct of *time*. Items 11, 24, and 25 have been grouped together as they are perceived to represent elements related to the construct, *time*. All four groups (gender, teaching experience, teaching level and teacher training) are included for each of the four items. Frequencies and percentages for each item within each group indicate the negative, neutral, and positive responses. Mean scores for each item are also provided.

Table 4.7: Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations related to *time*

Latent Construct	Item	Items related to		Sample (N)	Negative (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Positive (4-5)	Mean score/ item (M)	Standard deviation (SD)
Time	11. Sufficient time and resources should be made available to implement inclusion in mainstream programmes. <i>Subjective Norms</i>	Gender	Male	16	-	-	16 (100%)	4.5	.05
			Female	19	-	-	19 (100%)		
		Teaching experience	0-15 years	6	-	-	6 (100%)		
			15+ years	29	-	-	29 (100%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	-	-	10 (100%)		
			Higher	25	-	-	25 (100%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	-	-	10 (100%)		
			NO	25	-	-	25 (100%)		
	24. I have sufficient time to deal with the demands of Introducing inclusive practices in the curriculum. <i>Perceived Behaviour Control</i>	Gender	Male	16	12(75%)	1(6%)	3(19%)	2.2	1.0
			Female	19	17(89%)	1(5.5%)	1(5.5%)		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	4(67%)	1(16%)	1(16%)		
			15+ years	29	25(86%)	1(3.5%)	3(10.5%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	7(70%)	1(10%)	2(20%)		
			Higher	25	22(88%)	1(4%)	2(8%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	7(70%)	2(20%)	3(30%)		
			NO	25	22(88%)	-	1(4%)		
	25. I have adequate time for students with learning disabilities. <i>Perceived Behaviour Control</i>	Gender	Male	6	6(100%)	-	-	2.2	0.8
			Female	19	19(100%)	-	-		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	6(100%)	-	-		
			15+ years	29	19(100%)	-	-		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	10(100%)	-	-		
			Higher	25	25(100%)	-	-		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	10(100%)	-	-		
			NO	25	25(100%)	-	-		

Teachers felt very strongly that *time* is an element of concern as indicated by the mean score ($M=4.5$; $SD=.05$), in item 11 in Table 4.7. All teachers (100%) supported the belief that sufficient *time* should be made available to implement inclusion in mainstream programmes but all teachers (100%) also indicated strong disagreement that in reality they had the time to deal with students in inclusive practices (item 24, $M=2.2$; $SD=.8$). There are other noteworthy scores - approximately 89% males and 75% females, 70% teaching lower (younger) level against 88% teaching higher (older) level as well as 70% who received special training against 88% who did not receive training- which reflect negative views about introducing inclusive practices in the curriculum due to time concerns.

Overall- slightly more males; teachers with less years of experience; and those teaching lower levels were more confident and held more positive attitudes towards having sufficient time in dealing with the demands of inclusive education.

4.3.3 Describing the latent construct, *training*

Table 4.8 (below) includes items 21, 28, 29 and 32 that have been grouped together as they were perceived to represent elements related to the construct, *training*. Previous researches conducted by Chopra (2008:2); Oswald (2010:5); Nel et al (2011:84); Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde (2012:2) provide evidence that training of both pre-service and in-service teachers contributes to more positive attitudes which is paramount to successful implementation of inclusive education. According to Donnahue and Bornman (2014:10) teachers still need to receive comprehensive training programmes in areas where they lack skills. All four groups (gender, teaching experience, teaching level and teacher training) are included in each of the four items. Frequencies and percentages for each item of the four items indicate the negative, neutral, and positive responses. Mean scores for each item are also provided.

Table 4.8: Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations related to *training*

Latent Construct	Item	Items related to		Sample N)	Negative (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Positive (4-5)	Mean score/ Item (M)	Standard deviation (SD)
Training	21. My educational background has adequately prepared me to deal with an inclusion programme Perceived Behaviour Control	Gender	Male	16	9(56%)	2(13%)	5(31%)	3.0	1.0
			Female	19	6(32%)	3(16%)	10(53%)		
		Teaching experience	0-15 years	6	2(33%)	1(17%)	3(50%)		
			15+ years	29	13(45%)	4(14%)	12((41%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	3(30%)	1(10%)	6(60%)		
			Higher	25	12(48%)	4(16%)	9(36%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	2(20%)	1(10%)	7(70%)		
			NO	25	13(52%)	4(16%)	8(32%)		
	28. I am knowledgeable about assistive devices, e.g. hearing aids, audio visual aids and other assisted devices. Perceived Behaviour Control	Gender	Male	16	11(69%)	1(6%)	4(25%)	2.6	1.4
			Female	19	12(63%)	2(11%)	5(26%)		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	3(50%)	-	4(25%)		
			15+ years	29	20(69%)	3(10%)	5(17%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	6(60%)	-	4(40%)		
			Higher	25	17(68%)	3(12%)	5(20%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	3(30%)	2(20%)	5(50%)		
			NO	25	20(80%)	1(4%)	4(16%)		
	29. All teachers should be adequately trained and qualified for the implementation of Inclusive Education Subjective Norms	Gender	Male	16	1(6%)	2(13%)	13(81%)	4.4	0.8
			Female	19	-	-	19(100%)		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	-	-	6(100%)		
			15+ years	29	1(3%)	2(7%)	26(90%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	-	-	-		
			Higher	25	1(4%)	2(8%)	22(88%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	-	-	10(100%)		
			NO	25	1(4%)	-	24(96%)		
	32. Schools should provide sufficient in-service training for teachers wanting to enhance their knowledge and skills. Subjective Norms	Gender	Male	16	-	-	16(100%)	4.7	0.5
			Female	19	-	-	19(100%)		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	-	-	6(100%)		
			15+ years	29	-	-	29(100%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	-	-	10(100%)		
			Higher	25	-	-	25(100%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	-	-	10(100%)		
			NO	25	-	-	25(100%)		

Items (Table 4.8) which reflect the confidence level of teachers in the *Perceived Behaviour Control* construct were more neutral to negative. Item 21 reflects a mean score of 3.0; ($SD=1.0$) and item 28 with an even lower mean ($M=2.6$) and a more varied response ($SD=1.4$). On closer inspection of the results across all the groups, the most negative finding is item 28 where 80% who did not receive any training and 30% who did receive training indicated that they were not knowledgeable about assistive devices used in inclusive practices. At the other end of the scale, 50% who received training as well as 16% who did not receive any training expressed positive views about being knowledgeable about assistive devices. Also, 60% higher level teachers compared to the 36% lower level teachers in item 21, and 40% higher level teachers compared to 20% lower level teachers in item 28 displayed more confidence and positive attitudes to aspects of teaching training. Furthermore, more females (53%) than males (31%) as well as those who received training (70%) compared to the 32% who did not receive any training, were confident and were positive that their educational background had prepared them to deal with inclusion.

4.3.4 Describing the latent construct, *classroom management*

Table 4.9 (below) provides descriptions of findings related to how teachers felt about managing inclusive classrooms. According to Oswald (2010:5) South African teachers felt threatened and experienced stress when including students with learning barriers into mainstream classrooms, citing work overload, large classes, and curriculum diversity, etc. as some of its main challenges. The descriptions which follow expound on how this group of South African teachers in Oman felt about classroom management in the inclusive environment in classrooms.

Two items (14 and 17) were selected from the *Attitude construct* and grouped together. In order to summarise findings, two aspects based on teacher experiences were explored- one was aimed at determining whether teachers felt they could deal with inclusive classrooms (item 14) and the second aimed at determining whether teachers viewed inclusion as posing a challenge to classroom management (item 17). Frequencies and percentages for the items of each item indicate the negative, neutral, and positive responses. Mean scores for each item are also provided.

Table 4.9: Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations related to *classroom management*.

Latent Construct	Item	Items related to		Sample (N)	Negative (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Positive (4-5)	Mean score/Item M	Standard deviation SD
Classroom Management	14. Teachers are able to deal with classroom management in inclusive environments <i>Attitudes based on personal experiences</i>	Gender	Male	16	7(44%)	3(19%)	6(38%)	3.2	1.2
			Female	19	7(37%)	3(16%)	9(47%)		
		Teaching experience	0-15 years	6	1(17%)	2(34%)	1(17%)		
			15+ years	29	13(45%)	4(14%)	14(48%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	1(10%)	2(20%)	7(70%)		
			Higher	25	13(52%)	4(16%)	8(32%)		
	17. Classroom management does not pose a challenge in the inclusion in mainstream classroom <i>Attitudes based on personal experiences</i>	Training in special needs	YES	10	3(30%)	2(20%)	5(50%)	2.1	0.9
			NO	25	11(44%)	4(16%)	10(40%)		
		Gender	Male	16	14(87%)	-	2(13%)		
			Female	19	15(78%)	2(11%)	2(11%)		
		Teaching Experience	0-15 years	6	6(100%)	-	-		
			15+ years	29	23(79%)	2(7%)	4(14%)		
		Teaching level (school)	Lower	10	7(70%)	-	3(30%)		
			Higher	25	22(88%)	2(8%)	1(4%)		
		Training in special needs	YES	10	8(80%)	-	2(20%)		
			NO	25	21(84%)	2(8%)	2(8%)		

In Table 4.9, item 14 yields results with a mean score of 3.2 and with varied responses spread around the mean ($SD=1.2$). This score reflects a more neutral view held by teachers. In other words, there were more varied responses across groups about how teachers felt about being able to deal with classroom management in inclusive settings. Teachers (70%) teaching at lower levels indicated to be most positive than in any other group. In item 17, the mean score ($M=2.1$; $SD=.9$) is lower than the score in item 14, reflecting far more negative views towards inclusive education posing a challenge in classrooms.

Some very interesting and in a way surprising results (when compared to previous studies) are those in item 17. Teachers with less than 15 years (100%), teachers who received some training (80%) and teachers (70%) in lower levels, who indicated and agreed that classroom management posed challenges in mainstream classes. Previous studies indicate that teachers with fewer teaching years, those who received training and teachers in primary or elementary schools tend to reflect more positivity towards inclusionary practices (Gaad & Khan, 2007:104; Alahbabi, 2009:52; Dukmak, 2013:35; Donahue & Bornman, 2014). However, this is not the case in this study.

In summary, even though teachers were neutral about being able to deal with inclusion in classes most teachers agreed that inclusion posed a challenge in managing inclusion in mainstream classrooms.

4.4 REFLECTING ON THE RELIABILITY OF THE RESULTS

As explained in Chapter Three, Cronbach's alpha statistics were conducted to determine the correlation between items and the construct these items intend to measure. Reliability scores indicate measurements for the three constructs as follows- Subjective Norms (Cronbach's alpha 0.758); Attitudes based on personal experience (Cronbach's alpha 0.545) and Perceived Behaviour Control (Cronbach's alpha 0.885). Based on these scores both the Subjective Norms and the Perceived Behaviour Control constructs report results which are considered acceptable and within the degree of reliability (Field, 2006:1; Jones & Rattray, 2007:237). However, the score reflected by the Attitude construct indicate less reliability (.545) and one which is not considered acceptable.

Table 4.10 (below) indicates the individual corrected items as they correlate to the total alpha score (.545) for the *Attitude*-construct as well as the Cronbach alpha score should the item be deleted from the questionnaire. For example, item 16 possibly implies an item that was too vague or one that required further explanation with the result that the response rate was not easily measurable. Item 16 reflects the lowest measure (.091) and if the item is removed, the Cronbach's Alpha measure would improve (.592). Field (2006:1) does explain that when psychological construct values are tested, values below 0.7 can be realistic because of the diverse nature of the construct. In other words, if item 16 is removed from the construct, the construct would report a score of 0.592 which could possibly be a more acceptable alpha statistic for the attitude construct. This general guideline should be treated with caution because the alpha also depends on the number of items on the scale (Field, 2006:1). In terms of the present study, the researcher did not reflect item 16 in any of the findings related to the latent constructs. Even though the attitude construct reported low alpha measures all items in this construct were retained in the questionnaire and were used to explore maximum findings from all the data received especially since the sample size was too small for generalizability.

Table 4.410: Cronbach's alpha scores for items in the attitude construct

Items	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
14. Teachers are able to deal with classroom management in inclusive environments	.268	.518
15. Collaborative teaching is important when you have a student/s with special needs in the classroom	.357	.478
16. Students who are diagnosed with more severe disabilities such as autistic and mental disabilities [do not] need to be kept in special schools	.091	.592
17. Classroom management [should not] pose a challenge in the inclusion in mainstream classroom	.265	.510
18. Inclusive practices are implemented successfully at schools	..295	.498
19. Inclusion works well in countries where it has been implemented	.575	..396
20. Teachers need guidelines on Inclusive Education implementation at schools	..185	.537

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter reported findings of a survey about teacher attitudes on inclusive education conducted on South African teachers in Oman. The study employed descriptive statistics to explain and illustrate findings. Both positive and negative attitudes, as well as neutral views held by teachers, were highlighted. Teachers were most positive towards the social norms and beliefs of inclusion and the least positive or the most negative views were expressed at the confidence level or the will to implement inclusion. Negative attitudes were expressed in the role of schools to make provision for inclusion; teachers not being empowered at schools; teachers not feeling equipped or knowledgeable about inclusion practices and devices; and the lack of time to include inclusive practices in the curriculum. Four underlying constructs, *teacher support*, *training*, *time* and *classroom management* were identified and emerging patterns across items were explored which indicated how these non-motivational constructs affected attitudes. Whilst most of the findings reflect favourable support for the latent constructs, there are elements within findings highlighting neutral to negative results or less supportive outcomes that require further discussion. This was followed by a discussion on the reliability of findings reflected in the questionnaire.

The following and final chapter aims to explore and discuss some of these findings mentioned above in greater detail and within limits of not making any generalisations or final conclusions.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Five summarises the findings of analysis of data gathered from a survey study presented in Chapter Four. The discussion which follows places the study into perspective (5.2) in terms of the entire research. Research findings are discussed for each attitude-construct (5.3) as they relate to Ajzen's TPB (1991) conceptual framework underpinning this study. The chapter then takes a closer look at how various items (5.4) relate to latent constructs perceived to affect attitudes of teachers. Implications of the study (5.5) are discussed, followed by recommendations for future research (5.6), and then by the limitations of the study (5.7). Finally, a summary (5.8) provides a conclusion to the chapter and overall study.

5.2 PLACING THE STUDY INTO PERSPECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

Many South African teachers left the country for various reasons to teach at schools abroad, even before policies on inclusion were introduced at schools in South Africa. Many left after 1994 when apartheid was dismantled in South Africa and when the doors of opportunity opened, affording South Africans the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of working as expatriates. Some South Africans went to countries in the Middle East with little or no training on how to deal with children with special needs and inclusion in schools. At the same time, international policies on inclusion were being developed and implemented at government levels, globally. Most countries in the Middle East responded favourably in support of international policies and were gradually transforming their educational systems to become more inclusive (Weber, 2012:85).

Research has demonstrated that the success of inclusive education is dependent upon teacher attitudes (Gaad, 2011:92) and that "*negative perceptions of inclusive education may create barriers, especially when teachers attempt to include students with learning difficulties in classrooms*" (Newton, Hunter-Johnson; Gardiner-Farquharson & Cambridge, 2014:1). The aim of this small-scale study was to explore the attitudes towards inclusive education held by South Africans teaching in private and international schools in Oman. The rationale for doing this study was to explore the attitudes of these South Africans based on their experiences as expatriates in a foreign country in the Middle East, at schools where inclusion was recently implemented but where little research was

conducted in the area (Weber, 2012:86; Nadra, 2009:19). In addition, the purpose was also to gain more knowledge about the elements that may influence attitudes, as these attitudes may well act to facilitate or constrain the implementation of inclusive practices. The survey study was aimed at gathering information and the results were reported in Chapter Four. The small sample of subjects (N=35) in this study has prompted the researcher to maximise findings by exploring all variations of data to describe teacher attitudes as they relate to the study. No inferential statistics were employed to establish any relationships or correlations. In other words, no statistical significances were established. However, this discussion hopefully provides insightful and meaningful background information of South African teacher attitudes in Oman intended for future discussions and further research.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS/ DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In Chapter 1 the following research questions were stated:

- *What attitudes towards inclusive education are held by South African expatriates teaching in private and international schools in Oman?*
- *How do teacher characteristics impact the attitudes of South African teachers towards inclusive education?*

This research study employed a 35 worded-item questionnaire to extract information related to teacher attitudes. The questionnaire focused on the educators' biographical data, experiences, knowledge, skills and training. To answer the first research question on attitudes towards inclusion, items in the questionnaire were grouped into three constructs (*Subjective Norms, Attitude* and *Perceived Behaviour Control*) as outlined in Ajzen's (1991) conceptual framework. The results were reported in Chapter four and in this chapter the findings for each attitude-construct (5.3.1) as they relate to the conceptual framework underpinning this study, are discussed.

The second research question aimed at exploring elements which affect teacher attitudes were also derived from the items grouped together which the researcher considered to be related to four latent constructs (teacher support, training, time and classroom management). The findings obtained from the data are discussed and compared (5.4) to studies from previous researches as presented in the literature review in Chapters Two.

5.3.1 Summary of attitudes related to Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (1991)

Findings related to the *Subjective Norms* construct, indicate that respondents expressed their support for various social beliefs of inclusive education. Teachers expressed their agreement to principles related to inclusive policies, collaborative teaching, supportive environments and specialised training; highlighted by international conventions such as UNESCO (2009) and national policies such as South Africa's *White Paper 6* (DoE, 2001). These findings corroborate with the comparative studies conducted between South Africa and Sweden on teacher attitudes by Nel, Müller, Hugo, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011:86) and international studies by de Boer, Pijlb and Minnaerta (2011:331-336) who conducted a global study of attitudes of teachers between the period 1998 and 2008, as well as studies conducted by Alahbabi (2009:51) in the UAE and by Dukmak (2013:26-38) also from the UAE, who all report measures of positivity towards the principles of inclusion. Ajzen (1991) describes *Subjective Norms* as the person's own estimate of social pressure to perform the target behaviour and judging from the responses in this study, the outcome appears to be very favourable to how teachers would be expected to behave (normative beliefs).

Findings for the *Attitude* construct, which Ajzen (1991) describes as the person's overall evaluation of the behaviour based on experiences, seem to indicate more negative to neutral attitudes towards the implementation of inclusive education. These findings are not surprising when viewed along other studies. In the research study conducted by de Boer et al (2011:331-336) on teacher attitudes, they report neutral to negative experiences towards the inclusion of pupils with special needs in regular primary education. Weber (2012:93) did a study on the implementation of inclusive education in the Gulf region and reports that because inclusive education was relatively new to the region, many teachers were uncertain about the value of inclusion because of challenges in mainstream schools with '*low functioning children*' and the shortage of general education teachers. Likewise, the group of South Africans in this study viewed inclusion as challenging- especially in managing inclusion in mainstream classrooms; as well as their poor ability to deal with students with severe learning difficulties. South African teachers' negative to neutral response towards inclusive practices in Oman could possibly be ascribed to the notion that proper implementation of policies is to some extent lacking or inadequate (Dalton, Mckenzie & Kahonde, 2012:2; Eloff, 2007:355; Oswald, 2010:67). Teachers' uncertainty as to how other countries were experiencing inclusion could possibly be ascribed to the lack of advocacy of inclusion within educational institutions. Policies worldwide are changing rapidly and according to Engelbrecht (2007:126) everybody involved in education has to be informed of new and changing policies to reflect more positive responses. The assumption is that teachers are more receptive towards changes if they are more aware of policy and knowledge based issues (Nel et al, 2011:86).

The *Perceived Behavioural Control* construct is the extent to which a person feels able to enact the *Behaviour* (inclusive education) (Ajzen, 1991). It is determined by control beliefs about the power of both situational (extrinsic) and internal factors to inhibit or facilitate the performing of the behaviour which relates to the knowledge and skills of teachers and their readiness and willingness to implement inclusive education. South African teachers reflect very little confidence to support or implement inclusive education for this construct. Findings indicate that teachers' educational backgrounds did not provide the necessary support for nearly half the number of the participants (N=15) in the study and the majority (N=27) indicated that schools did not empower them either to deal with inclusive environments. The findings based on knowledge and skills indicate teachers felt ill-equipped and lacked confidence to deal with inclusion in classrooms and to successfully meet the needs to implement inclusionary practices. More than half the number of participants (N=23) indicated that schools did not have inclusionary policies to implement inclusion, barriers to learning were not considered, *and time* did not allow them to deal with inclusion in classrooms- all of which are considered vital to the successful implementation of inclusive education. A notable response from this construct is that many teachers (N=23) were in strong agreement that policies on the implementation of inclusive education at schools were lacking. Weber (2012:85) points out to possible reasons why schools in the Gulf region were still grappling with inclusive guidelines and the uncertainty amongst teachers. As stated earlier, the recent introduction of special needs education in the Gulf region due to the novelty of public education itself and together with prevalent historical cultural beliefs, are areas of concerns for inclusion in this region. Although governments endorsed the needs to address learning difficulties they still held strong cultural views of segregation along tribal, gender, and socio-economic lines (Weber 2012:89). Gender differentiation, for example, of teaching staff is evident in many schools in which male teachers teach boys and female teachers work with girls. This poses another concern for social inclusion at schools with far more implications. More views on the topic of gender will be discussed in a later section below.

In summary, at the *Attitudinal-value* level, teachers favourably expressed their agreement with the norms and values of inclusive education. However, at the *Perceived Behavioural Control* level, the measure which asks participants more directly if they would enact inclusive education, the responses were more varied and wavered. In other words, even though teachers held strong beliefs in inclusive education, teachers were not confident or convinced and lacked the will to implement inclusionary practices. Some possible reasons are cited for this outcome within the findings related to teacher experiences. The *Attitude* construct which measures teacher experiences indicate- the need for proper guidelines on inclusive education; the demand for the necessary teacher support and training; the view that inclusion is somewhat challenging especially for classroom management and curriculum development. To a greater extent, their poor ability to deal with students with severe learning difficulties and their lack of knowledge and skills seemed to contribute heavily towards

teachers' negative attitudes. Teachers did not feel that schools had empowered them to deal with inclusive education.

5.4 FINDINGS RELATED TO ITEMS WITHIN LATENT CONSTRUCTS

In order to gain more insight and have a better understanding of teacher attitudes the findings of certain items (extracted from biographical data) and the latent constructs (explained in Chapter Four) are discussed with the aim of exploring elements which may affect the attitudes of teachers towards implementation of inclusive education.

5.4.1 Discussion on findings related to *teacher support*

Mainstream teachers rely heavily on various support structures, as reported in many studies (Englebrecht, 2007; Alahbabi, 2009; Nel et al, 2011; de Boer et al, 2011; Dukmak 2013; Anati, 2013). In the present study, most respondents were also in strong agreement of *teacher support*. In comparison to female teachers, male teacher participants indicated a stronger response for *teacher support* thus, which seems logical to the researcher, reported to have a stronger desire for working collaboratively. There is also evidence that those teachers with more than 15 years of experience indicated slightly more agreement than those with less than 15 years teaching experience for *teacher support*. This finding does not corroborate with previous studies where teachers with fewer years teaching experience responded more positively towards teacher support (Donahue & Bornman, 2014:4). The result could also mean that those teachers with fewer years teaching experience were more confident, more knowledgeable and consequently required less *teacher support*. However, this finding was not statistically established from this limited study. Also interesting in the underlying construct *teacher support*, are findings that indicate a small percentage of teachers who actually received some training in inclusive education and who held negative attitudes to *teacher support*. The assumption is that teacher training would provide the support to produce more positive attitudes towards the general philosophy of inclusive education (de Boer, Pijlb & Minnaerta, 2011:334). A possible explanation for this negativity could be related to advocacy and/or the quality of support that the teachers received. Dalton, Mckenzie and Kahonde (2012:2) in their studies of South African teachers, claim that teacher support programmes did not adequately support teachers to design and present the curriculum in ways that can meet the diverse needs of learners in their classrooms, resulting in stress and negative attitudes of teachers.

It must be noted that Oman in 2006 introduced at its national university, Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), a special needs teaching diploma to address the needs of inadequate trained staff (Weber, 2011:93) but it does appear that at school level they have not effectively addressed or made adequate provision for the necessary support to in-service teachers, especially for its large expatriate

teaching community, which is a matter of concern. In a recent newspaper article by the MoE of Oman, they report on support measures that are provided to teachers and schools (Muscat Daily, 2015). The MoE acknowledges that supporting teachers must continue to develop current practices to improve teaching and recognises that educating teachers are ongoing processes throughout the teacher's career. Presently, according to the article, the MoE supports schools '*to make greater use of the expertise of practicing teachers, to encourage more teacher-peer collaboration where teachers meet at the local level to share ideas and develop good practices, and it also provides an on-line forum for professional development*' (Muscat Daily, 2015). Accordingly, if schools utilise these opportunities, then effective support for teachers to implement all-encompassing inclusive practices could possibly be achieved.

5.4.2 Discussion on findings related to *time*

The item represented by the *Subjective Norm* construct shows very strong agreement amongst teachers that *time* is essential to implement inclusive education. Teachers unanimously agreed that they did not have adequate time to deal with the demands of students with special needs and responded most negatively to the item in the *Perceived Behavioural Control* construct. Donahue and Bornman (2014:9) in a review on South African teachers describe teachers' capacity to deal with diversity as being considerably taxing due to workload and time constraints teachers are faced with in classrooms.

More varied responses were observed across items as to how teachers actually perceived the *time* needed to introduce inclusive practice in the curriculum. More male than female teachers indicated that they had sufficient *time* to deal with inclusive practices. This finding perhaps corroborates well to the finding for *teacher support*, where males indicated that they were more in favour of working collaboratively. The male teacher respondents seemingly had more time and were more willing to deal with the demands of inclusive education. Dukmak (2013:31) conducted studies in the UAE and also reported males to have more positive attitudes than females. On the other hand, there are studies that support the view that there is no correlation between a teacher's gender and their attitude towards inclusive education (Sharma & Subban, 2005:54; Alghazo & Gaad, 2004:96).

Teachers with more than 15 years of experience (N=25) and those teaching at higher levels (N=22) also indicated more negativity towards having sufficient time for developing inclusive practices in the curriculum. Donahue and Bornman (2014:4) expound on possible reasons why teachers with more teaching experience would have negative attitudes. Older teaching staff did not receive any training and experiences in dealing with student with learning difficulties, whereas today most educational institutions include inclusionary programmes in studies today. According to Donahue and Bornman,

(2014:4) teachers adopt more positive attitudes with more exposure to inclusion. Furthermore, the majority of teachers including those who received training indicated that they did not have sufficient time to deal with inclusionary practices in the curriculum. This result does not simply imply that teachers are negative to the idea of inclusion but that more *time* should be afforded to teachers to do effective planning to adapt teaching curricula.

Overall, more males, teachers with less years of experience, and those teaching lower levels were more confident and held positive attitudes towards having sufficient time in dealing with the demands of inclusive education.

5.4.3 Discussion on findings related to *training*

The items identified to represent the construct, *training*, show findings which indicate the difference between the beliefs of teachers and the actual confidence teachers have towards *training* in schools. All teachers (N=35) strongly believed that training is essential to implement inclusion and that schools should provide the necessary in-service training for teachers. However, the confidence level displayed by teachers to implement inclusionary practices indicates that teachers did not feel adequately equipped and trained to deal with inclusion. These responses were varied across the biographical items explored. More males indicated that their educational background did not prepare them for inclusion and therefore they strongly agreed to training at schools. This finding could be viewed positively when considering that males were in favour of working collaboratively and felt they had sufficient time to develop curricula for inclusion and would therefore show support for training programmes at schools. Successful training of in-service teachers to address shortcomings could meet the requirements to implement inclusion successfully (Alahbabi, 2009:51; Dalton, Mckenzie & Kahonde, 2012:2; Rahaman, 2012:89).

The success of training is also observed in the findings held by teachers who received some training and who indicated favourably to being adequately trained and having knowledge about assistive devices. This indicates that training can possibly provide the essential skills and knowledge required for implementation of inclusion. A similar pattern of results is also observed, as in the *time* construct, where teachers with less years of experience and those teaching lower levels were slightly more positive towards *training* to help deal with practices in inclusive education.

Overall, outcomes from these findings report that teachers believed that all teachers should be adequately trained and that schools should provide the necessary opportunities for training. Most teachers who had some training held more positive views than those who did not. However, there are findings that indicate that even teachers who received training indicated negative perceptions possibly due to poor training or not receiving adequate training to deal with inclusion in classrooms (Dalton, Mckenzie & Kahonde, 2012:6; Eloff, 2007:353; Oswald, 2010:71).

5.4.4 Discussion on findings related to *classroom management*

Two items from the *Attitude* construct indicate findings of how teachers experienced inclusion in classrooms. The findings for the latent construct, *classroom management*, report negative to neutral attitudes with varied responses across themes. Males felt slightly more negative than females towards the belief that they are able to deal and manage inclusion within classrooms. Males also appeared to have stronger feelings than females in terms of the idea that implementing inclusion poses challenges to *classroom management*. This finding could be viewed in light of the other previous findings where males did not feel adequately equipped and trained to deal with inclusion.

More discussion needs to be focused on the reasons why findings of teachers with fewer teaching experience, teachers who had some training and those teaching lower levels reflect negativity towards dealing with inclusion in the classroom. These findings do not seem to corroborate with those in discussions (above) and with those in previous studies (Alghazo & Gaad, 2004:95; Alahbabi, 2009:51; Dukmak, 2013:30; Donahue & Bornman, 2014). According to studies conducted by both Alahbabi, (2009:51) and Dukmak (2013:30) in the UAE elementary/primary school teachers were not only more willing but more able to accommodate students with special needs than high school teachers. Alahbabi (2009:51) explains that high school teachers may be less willing to accommodate due to the learning content which is focused on more complex concepts and might be difficult for a student with special needs to understand. Within all three items (teaching experience, teaching levels and teacher training) teachers indicate positive views and agreement that their educational background prepared them for inclusion in the classroom (item 21), yet in item 17 they indicate more negativity that classroom management poses a challenge for inclusion in the classroom. This result could possibly be representative of the lack of teacher support, inadequate teacher skills or on-going training (as reported in previous discussions) required to be able to deal with inclusion within their present setting (schools in Oman). A point to be made is that teachers' educational background in inclusive education does not necessary imply that they are able to deal effectively with inclusion in classrooms.

Overall, across all items there is agreement that in reality *classroom management* does pose a challenge to inclusionary practices. There is, however, a small percentage of males and females and those who taught more than 15 years, as well as those who did not receive any special training who indicated positive views that *classroom management* does not pose a challenge to inclusion in mainstream classrooms. This finding is very promising as a study for future research.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

The research findings which are only applicable to this sample of the study indicate:

- South African expatriates in Oman held positive attitudes and were supportive of the implementation of inclusive education. This outcome also indicates support to the UNESCO definition of inclusive education to “*provide opportunities for all young people to have learning opportunities in mainstream schools regardless of their cultural and social backgrounds or differences in abilities and capacities*” which has also been endorsed and accepted by the country, Oman (Sultanate of Oman, 2008:52).
- However, teachers showed less confidence and less enthusiasm towards the will to implement inclusive education in the classroom. More negative attitudes towards the actual implementation of inclusion in mainstream classes were observed, especially with regards to policy implementation at school level and schools not empowering teachers to deal with inclusion. These views could constrain or hamper successful implementation in classrooms.
- Most teachers, with an exception of a small percentage who received some training to deal with children with learning difficulties, were positive towards training at schools. Training plays a very important role in inclusionary practices. Effective training could help teachers acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with the diverse needs of learners who are integrated into one classroom.
- More male teachers than female teachers indicated their support for *teacher support, training* and *classroom management*. Males indicated, in particular, the strong desire for working collaboratively and the need for adequate in-service training. This could possibly imply that male teachers were integrated differently into educational environments at schools.
- Teachers teaching at different levels held different attitudes. Most of the findings indicated teachers teaching at high schools/colleges or older group of students tend to be less positive than those teaching at lower levels (kindergarten/primary school). Teachers teaching older groups of students appear to be less knowledgeable and less prepared or equipped to deal with inclusion.
- Classroom management seem to pose a challenge to many teachers even to those teachers who indicated their background knowledge had prepared them for inclusion. This could probably relate to inadequate support, lack of proper skills and/or ongoing training within present educational settings.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PRESENT STUDY AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this study the main focus was on the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. The following recommendations are made to provide suggestions of ways to eliminate and discourage negative attitudes, while promoting positive approaches to inclusion based on this study:

- Administrators at both macro and micro levels in education should take cognisance of how teachers perceive their roles in inclusionary settings. Research communicates the view that teachers are the key to the success of inclusionary programmes as they are '*viewed as linchpins in the process of including students with barriers to learning into regular classes*' (Kern 2006:2). Teachers are regarded central to the transformation processes in education and as such advocacy on inclusion is essential. On-going discussions, regular updates, workshops and training programmes in schools should help teachers enhance understandings, dispel myths, develop strategies and overcome fears to deal with inclusionary practices in classrooms.
- There is a plea amongst expatriate South African teachers for teacher support and many are in favour of working collaboratively. The nature of an expatriate is that they come from diverse backgrounds and are expected to integrate into a society usually with different cultures and traditions. Likewise, this is applicable to South African teachers teaching in Oman. The MoE in Oman has pledged their commitment to supporting schools financially and to devolve more responsibilities to regions and schools to encourage all its teachers to become more '*inclusive partners*' in the transformation and management of the education system (Muscat Daily, 2013). It is strongly recommended that private and international Omani schools take advantage of the MoE's commitment to prepare teachers to play more central roles in this process. Schools should employ strategies, afford time and provide opportunities for all its expatriate teachers to come together and to relate their experiences, share expertise and to work more closely with MoE in Oman.
- It is also recommended that the needs of male teachers specifically be addressed. They seem to be less empowered than female teachers towards the inclusive education transformation process. Schools are recommended to make a concerted effort to employ strategies and provide opportunities for male teachers to be included in the inclusionary process.

In line with the recommendations on how to reduce negative attitudes and encourage positive approaches, the following researches are recommended for further studies aimed at observing and monitoring change in attitudes especially to teachers in the Middle East.

- It is recommended that a longitudinal study be used to investigate the impact of training on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. It is suggested that the research focusses on the type, quality and frequency of training programmes provided. Findings could establish the effectiveness of training in developing the needed skills and knowledge to change perceptions and attitudes of in-service teachers toward inclusion.
- A relevant study on gender related policies based on cultural and traditional values pertaining specifically to countries in the Middle East, is another recommended research. The study can focus on both gender (male and female) and how they relate to attitudes of teachers toward implementing inclusion in classrooms.
- A study which involves a larger sample size is recommended. It would allow the researcher to statistically establish the viability of theoretical constructs specifically via exploratory factor analysis as well as determine correlations between items. This will also provide the research with more conclusive findings generalizable to the entire study.
- A research focussing on attitudes specifically based on the experiences as an expatriate in a foreign country is recommended, to provide a more in-depth study and to shed more light on the research related to teacher attitudes towards inclusion.
- The research could be extended to one or more neighbouring Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Not only would it provide a larger sample size but it can motivate for a comparative study between countries in the Middle East region.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although this study has achieved its objectives of determining the attitudes of South African teachers in Oman and has identified certain elements which may affect attitudes, several limitations exist with regard to the sample, instrument, and to some extent to the field of study.

Firstly, a small sample size (N=35) was employed due to the limiting population group of teachers in Oman. This sample was extracted from a specific group of South Africans who were members of a social group, (SAGO). The reason for this approach was due to ease of access to email addresses of South African teachers, which otherwise would not be easy to obtain due to the small South African teaching population dispersed at various private and international schools in Oman. Findings of the survey were limited to descriptive statistics only and, as a result, implied that no statistical tests could be conducted, which normally requires a larger sample size to ensure a representative distribution of the population and to whom results would be generalised. Therefore the results in this study are only applicable to this group of subjects under discussion and not to the broader South African teaching community in Oman and/or in the Middle East.

The study was limited by some of the inherent drawbacks of quantitative research; the questionnaire itself posed challenges. Some questions that seemed a bit more complex and requiring more than just a tick box resulted in teachers opting for the unsure or neutral option in the questionnaire. For example, item 16 that tested the view held by teachers regarding including children with more severe learning difficulties, like the *autistic and mentally challenged*, in the classroom. Perhaps for future research a mixed methods study incorporating the survey and short interviews could also be conducted to supplement or add more depth to findings.

The field of study was limited to one specific country. The sampling population could include all expatriates in the country (Oman) or could be extended to one or more neighbouring Gulf Cooperation Counties (GCC) such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia to encourage greater participation and to extend the scope of the analysis. A larger research study implies more reliable results could be obtained and more conclusive findings for the country or for the Middle East region could be established.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The term *attitude* was deconstructed into three aspects described in Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (1991) conceptual framework. This provided the researcher an opportunity to explore attitudes towards inclusion in terms of- its social beliefs held by teachers; teacher experiences; knowledge and skills required implementing inclusive education. The researcher employed a quantitative research study whereby questionnaires were completed by teachers via an online server. In total 35 respondents completed the questionnaires. They were from both genders with various years of teaching experience and were teaching at different teaching levels at schools. The survey provided findings for the three constructs which were statistically measured and discussed independently of each other and then summarised as a combined measure to determine the extent or level of the *Intention* to perform the *Behaviour*, inclusive education (Ajzen, 1991). South African teachers teaching at private and international schools in Oman were positive to the fundamental principles of inclusive education but were more cautious and held negative to neutral attitudes to its implementations due to certain challenges (*teacher support, in-service training, time and classroom management*) faced within inclusionary practices. Recommendations for future studies were listed and the limitations of the study were noted.

The outcomes of these findings are not too surprising but it has afforded the researcher an opportunity to conduct a research of a global concern in a country (Oman) where little research has been observed. Hopefully this study will contribute to existing studies and be a motivation for further discussions and future research. Lastly, in a statement issued by the Ministry of Education in Oman on the 43rd National Day and as a message to all those involved in education, it states that '*if the teaching profession is to retain the confidence of society, it must seize this opportunity* (teachers to play central roles) *and show itself willing to adapt and develop in a constructive manner* (increase expectations)" to cope with the many changes "*as economies and society evolve*" (Muscat Daily, 2013).

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Appendix 1: Certificate of Compliance



2014-10-06

Ref.
Nr:2014/October/45875979/MC

This is to certify that the researcher,

Ms. S Mobara

declared that she has complied with the ethical requirements stipulated by the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics during the fieldwork of the research project stipulated below.

Ms. S Mobara furthermore declares that she will adhere to these ethical requirements in the reporting of this study for degree purposes:

Survey of South African Expatriate Teacher Attitudes towards Inclusive Education in Mainstream (Private and International) schools in Oman

This compliance notification (2014/October/ 45875979/MC) has been considered by the chairperson of the Research Ethics Review committee of the College of Education, UNISA on 06 October 2014 and was found to be acceptable.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "M Claassens", with a horizontal line drawn underneath.

Dr. Madaleen Claassens
Chairperson of the CEDU Research Ethics Review Committee
UNISA
(012) 346 0701
mcdtc@netactive.co.za

Appendix 2: Email Invitation to Participant

Dear fellow South African

If you reading this email, it's because you most likely a South African, a teacher, and teaching in Oman. If this is you please continue reading. If not, I would appreciate it if you could forward this email to anyone you know that suits this description. Either way please take a moment of your time to read further and also to assist me with the following.

For those who don't know me, my name is Soraya Mobara. I am from Cape Town, South Africa and have been teaching in Oman for nearly nine years. I am here with my family- husband and three daughters. Presently I'm involved in studies through UNISA completing my Master's degree in Special Needs Education (SNE).

In order for me to complete this degree I need to do a research. My focus of research is mainly on determining the *attitudes of South African expatriates teaching in Omani schools towards Inclusive Education*. To make the research plausible a sample of at least 50 participants is needed.

Below I have included a link which will take you to an online website for surveys. This survey concerns general/regular and special education teacher attitudes' towards the inclusion of students with special education needs into the general/mainstream education classroom. It should take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time to complete. Firstly, it is very important that you acknowledge consent to partaking in the survey, by entering your email address and the date, before commencing the survey. The completed surveys will be collected and examined in anonymity. The information gathered from this questionnaire is for research purposes only but you are most welcome to discuss any of your concerns or ask any questions.

Thank you for just taking the time to read this email. I am looking forward to your response. Please, pass this email to any South African teacher in Oman fitting the criteria. It will be highly appreciated.

Best Regards,

Soraya Mobara

Please click on the following link to complete the survey.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1FEcVaqcGopjb12w3HM55sHPOTW6Lzse2OT51GRVDLU/viewform>

Appendix 3: Letter of Consent

Dear Participant,

Permission for research project:

I am a student at the University of South Africa trying to further my studies in Inclusive Education. As part of my Master studies with UNISA, I am conducting a survey of general and special education teacher attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities into the general/mainstream education classroom. In particular, I am focusing on South African teachers teaching in Oman.

This survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time to complete. The completed surveys will be collected and examined in anonymity. Please be assured that the information gathered from this questionnaire is for research purposes only. Your participation in the research is completely voluntarily. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time without consequence. Any and all personal and private information, which may be regarded as sensitive, including but not limited to names and locations will be treated with utmost confidentiality and anonymity throughout and subsequent to the study. Any findings pertaining to this research study will be made available for your perusal should you wish to examine them.

Your consent, as requested herein, would be greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions and/or concern in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact me..

I thank you in anticipation of your kind co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Soraya Mobara
Postgraduate student

Dr. Lisa Zimmerman
Research supervisor

* Required

Please indicate your consent to partake in this survey. *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ NO. If no you may exit the online server

Please enter your email address *

date *

mm/dd/yyyy

Appendix 4: Survey Questionnaire

PERSONAL DETAILS *

1. Gender?

- ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Nationality *

- ☐ South African
☐ Other:

3. Teacher qualifications *

- ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree
☐ Masters ☐ Doctorate
☐ Other:

4. Teacher *

- ☐ Kindergarten KG ☐ Elementary/Primary
☐ Secondary/Higher
☐ Other:

5. Years of experience *

- ☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15
☐ 15 +

6. Have you received any training/courses in teaching children with special needs or learning disabilities? *

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Please
☐ indicate the extent
(strongly disagree,
disagree, unsure,

agree or strongly
agree) with each
statement listed
below by checking
the correct block.

PART TWO

The following section examines the general beliefs you have towards Inclusive Education and dealing with learners with special needs and disabilities.

- 7. All efforts should be made to include all students in the regular education classrooms *
- 8. Inclusion helps students with disabilities adjust socially *
- 9. Inclusion helps students with disabilities improve academically. *
- 10. It is necessary to modify instruction and teaching styles to meet the needs of students with disabilities. *
- 11. Sufficient time and resources should be made available to implement inclusion in mainstream programmes. *
- 12. It is necessary to have formal qualifications to implement inclusive practices. *
- 13. An inclusive policy is necessary in every school *

PART THREE

Your experiences about inclusive practices in general...

- 14. Teachers are able to deal with classroom management in inclusive environments *
- 15. Collaborative teaching is important when you have a student/s with special needs in the classroom *
- 16. Students who are diagnosed with more severe disabilities such as autistic and mental disabilities need not be kept in special schools. *
- 17. Classroom management do not pose a challenge in the inclusion in mainstream classroom *
- 18. Inclusive practices are implemented successfully at schools *
- 19. Inclusion works well in countries where it has been implemented *
- 20. Teachers need guidelines on Inclusive Education implementation at schools *

PART FOUR

Your current personal experiences and your role as a teacher.

- 21. My educational background has adequately prepared me to deal with an inclusion programme *
- 22. My school's policy makes provision for Inclusive Education *
- 23. The current ethos at my school considers barriers to learning *
- 24. I have sufficient time to deal with the demands of introducing inclusive practices in the curriculum. *
- 25. I have adequate time for students with learning disabilities *
- 26. I benefit professionally and personally from working in a collaborative team *
- 27. I have been sufficiently involved in the inclusion process in my classroom. *
- 28. I am knowledgeable about assistive devices, e.g. hearing aids, audio visual aids and other assisted devices. *

PART FIVE

Your view on improving and/or implementing inclusive practices in your school.

- 29. All teachers should be adequately trained and qualified for the implementation of Inclusive Education *
- 30. Schools should receive more financial and technical support, infrastructures and practical guidelines. *
- 31. Regular Education and Special Education teachers should work collaboratively * 32. Schools should provide sufficient in-service training for teachers wanting to enhance their knowledge and skills. *

PART SIX

Your experiences as an expatriate South African teaching in Oman.

- 33. The school has empowered me in dealing with an inclusive environment *
- 34. I've gained more experience to teach students with disabilities in my classroom *
- 35. I feel ready and equipped to teach at inclusive schools in South Africa *

